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Dear reader,

This 'Year Book' was undertaken in order to fill a void which we felt existed in the publication of the affairs of the Association from a local view point. In compiling the articles there were many which had to be overlooked this year for reason of space and we are already planning a bigger and better edition next year.

We received support and encouragement from all sides but particularly from Tom Courell, Sean Rice, Christy Loftus and Johnny Mulvey. These people gave freely of their time and set us a very high standard. There were many others, too numerous to mention, who were very helpful in placing at our disposal articles, photographs and other interesting material. Our special thanks are due to our advertisers and we recommend you to support them where possible.

In compiling this book the massive work being done voluntarily, and in many cases unrecognised and unrewarded by local Club officials for the promotion of the G.A.A., became more evident every day and we would like to place on record our admiration for these men and women.

In conclusion, may we wish all our readers a very happy Christmas and health and prosperity for 1971.

Yours sincerely,

G. HENRY
B. MacDONALD
R. CLARKE.

December, 1970.

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Another step forward

le Leon Ó Mórcháin



IT has become a commonplace criticism of the Gaelic Athletic Association in recent years that it does not cater enough for the social life of its patrons. Indeed the observation is so commonplace that even to acknowledge it has almost become a platitude. The criticism is still partly valid; for in our pampered society, when can we be said to have catered *enough* for social life? Yet a real beginning has been made: after-match meals together have become more usual; the annual "social" is a permanent event in the calendar of most clubs; and the winter social programme, now beginning its second season, is the latest contribution to interest activity and social enjoyment especially in areas which have too long been neglected. These are welcome developments indeed; and it is to be hoped that they are the forerunners of many more, especially in counties such as ours which are quietly but definitely being pushed out of the national social limelight. On this score alone, I sincerely welcome the arrival of Mayo's first 'Year Book'; for I feel that this publication too will add to the social pleasure of patrons and members in Mayo circles at home and abroad.

A second reason for which I warmly greet this 'Year Book' is that such a publication affords us an organ of communication of our own. Even in times when the importance of communication is being emphasized almost to the point of boredom, it is good to remember that communication *is* of utmost importance to any society; and that this fact is no less a fact because of its being

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often repeated. An organisation has a *power-ful* instrument in having its own organ of expression. If our organisation in Mayo has something to say, let it be said. While acknowledging the role and service of the public press, particularly of our Mayo press, I hope that the independent voice of Mayo G.A.A. will find its own outlet in this publication.

TRADITION OF SPORTSMANSHIP

But perhaps the most important and most lasting influence of such a venture is the opportunity which it affords of stirring a people's memory. Ní inné ná athrú a saolaíodh muid; agus is íontach an taca an chuimhne don ghníomh. Tugann an leabhrán seo le chéile aibhleoga an ghríosaigh chun tine nua a dheargú ar an sean-tinteán. Cuirfidh sé an mórtas cine ar lasadh agus ag gealú san teach arís! This *mórtas cine*—a pride in the achievements of our race—is something which we must hand on to the boys and girls of Mayo if their character is to have that particular Christian form which is their heritage for being born here. It has always manifested itself in a kindly (some would say too kindly!) spirit, coupled with a high ambition; and a fearless pride which carries victory with dignity, and defeat with a high head. It is a long tradition with us. Long before Mayo was a county, probably our first recorded loser was Ferdia; yet the record of his sportsmanship is more lasting than that of his defeat at the ford. And even today, no mature observer ever questions our sense of sportsmanship. But there is grit in our history too—in Ferdia, in the men of '98, in Davitt, in McBride. This 'Year Book' will, I hope, recall both the grit and the sportsmanship; and will enthuse young Mayo to learn and practice both.

At the risk of appearing to patronise, may I congratulate the club—Castlebar Mitchels—which has undertaken the publishing of this first 'Year Book' in Mayo; and thank, in the name of our County Board and of interested Mayo folk, those who have contributed the articles—especially our 'guest' writer, Mick Dunne.

Bíonn fáilte faoi leith i gcónaí roimh an gcéad leanbh ins an teaghlach. Is nuaíocht ann fhéin é. Sea, ach is tuar breá clainne freisin é. Gurab amhlaidh don oighre óg ar an teaghlach dílis seo!

DID YOU KNOW? That Mayo's first appearance in the All-Ireland Senior Football Final was in the historic year of 1916 when they were defeated by Wexford by 3-4 to 1-2. This was the second of four successive titles for Wexford.

Mayo — National Football League champions (1969-'70)

Mayo stand apart in League successes

by Sean Rice

IT began in November, two months after Kerry won their 21st All-Ireland title. It ended gloriously in May—with the bridging of a 16-year gap. Mayo had won their 10th National Football League title.

The thought lingers on with burning sensations as fresh as though, not seven months, but one day has passed since Mayo glittered in victory. Every Mayo man shared that success, clutched it greedily, and nothing that followed will smother its memory. Mayo now stand apart in League successes for no other team has won ten titles.

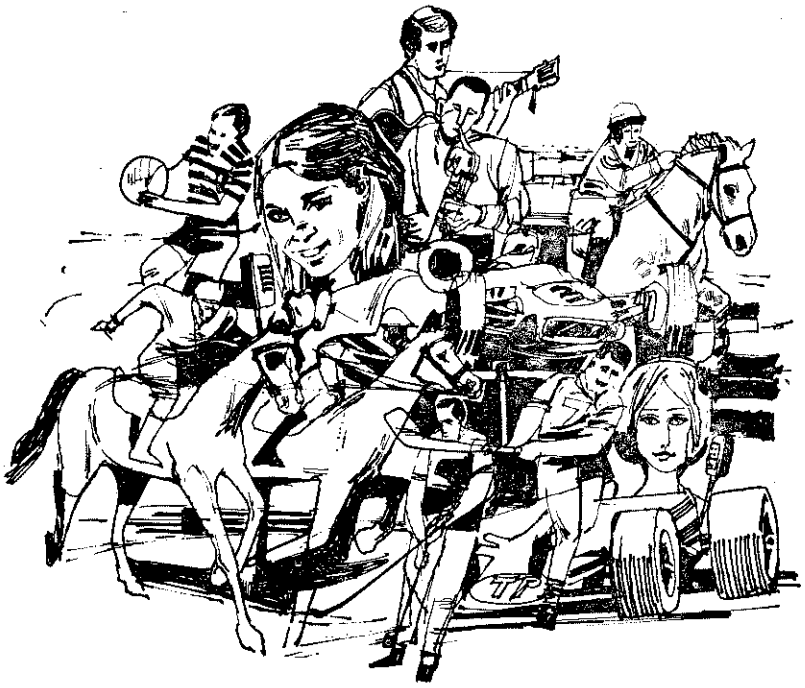
It was a tough campaign. More important, Mayo knew it would be tough. They were sandwiched in Group A of Division 3 between the All-Ireland champions and Offaly, the runners-up. Tipperary were there too, but not in contention. Mayo beat them in the first round in Clonmel. Kerry and Offaly were the big ones.

Kerry came to Castlebar for the first match, more confident and mature now that they had won the championship. They were without the great Mick O'Connell, but with everyone else. Logically, they were favourites. It was a wet and windy day, the stuff in which Kerry revel, and Mayo played into the teeth of the wind and rain in the first half.

They were trailing by five points at half time. It was a fragile lead for Kerry in such conditions, but they stubbornly resisted Mayo's assault on that lead up to ten minutes from the end. Then, Willie McGee crashed home one of his special goals and the game swung towards Mayo. When it was all over Mayo had two points to spare. And hopes began to swell.

One week later they met Offaly at Ballina, and won by three points. The pattern was familiar. They were down four points at the interval, but 15 minutes after the re-start Joe Corcoran scored a great goal and Mayo were on top again. It was sweet revenge, for a few weeks earlier Offaly thrashed them in the replay of the Grounds Tournament semi-final.

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So, there was one game left before Christmas—the return with Offaly, at Tullamore. And the result proved conclusively that Offaly were no match for an on-form Mayo, no match at all. They lost by 2-17 to 0-8. Those who were there will not forget the skill that oozed from the Mayo men. All of them combined in an exhibition that stunned Offaly and their supporters.

It was after Christmas that things began to go wrong. Mayo beat Tipperary in the return league match at Crossmolina, by eight points, but were drubbed by Derry in a challenge at the same venue and in their return league game with Kerry at Tralee were beaten by eight points in a mudbath.

But by then they had qualified for the semi-final of the division and were drawn against Clare. Kerry were drawn against Galway. Those defeats had Mayo prepared for Clare, and when they met at Pearse Stadium it was easy. Clare were unable to adapt to the open space of the big pitch in Galway and did not raise a flag at all in the first half. Mayo scored 1-5. The second half was a formality, and Mayo won by 3-11 to 0-5.

Kerry beat Galway and the final of the division was fixed for Galway in April after Kerry had returned from their world tour. But they were still favourites, for Mick O'Connell who did not travel with them on their tour was now back in action and he, they said, would swing the game in Kerry's favour. He didn't. Mayo won by two points and Kerry surrendered their league title after a royal battle. The final score was 0-10 to 1-5 but Mayo were far superior than that score suggested.

MAYO THROUGH — BY A WHISTLE!

It was a victory that would have been widely celebrated were it not for the fact that the following Sunday Mayo had to meet Derry in the league semi-final at Croke Park.

Few will forget that one. Derry, it will be remembered, were the favourites. All through the season they had been piling up big scores against all types of opposition. Even on Mayo they inflicted a crushing defeat in a challenge at Crossmolina.

But for all their promise, and the advantages of their big men, it was Mayo who set the pace in that memorable semi-final. They sealed off every gap, thwarted every threat and sizzled their way through 55 minutes of the match. And then almost let it slip in disaster.

They were six points ahead with five minutes left in the game, Derry seemed beaten. Then, you will recall, the ball, from

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a free by Sean O'Connell, swirled into the net off the clawing fingers of a Mayo defender. There were just three points in it now, but Joe Corcoran dashed down the field and pointed for Mayo and put them four points ahead and seemingly safe.

But with only a minute remaining Derry, striving desperately for another goal, swarmed back into attack. And Eamon Coleman wriggled his way through and scored to the horror of Mayo fans. Even then it seemed wrapped up for Mayo, but with only seconds remaining Derry were awarded a free. Sean O'Connell walked up to take it, but the ball dipped onto the fingers of backs and forwards, bobbed there for one awful moment and then went sailing over the bar. But the referee had blown his whistle for full time. The point did not count. Mayo had won and Derry were thwarted.

MAYO'S GLORIOUS HOUR

So they started the final on that Sunday in May, slowly, nervously, hesitantly. The game was only minutes old when P. J. Loftus twisted an ankle. Was this the start of the slide? Loftus limped off, came back briefly and then was replaced by Sean O'Grady. Allied to this was the fear that a variety of forward changes by Down would confuse and unsettle Mayo.

But that was all in the first few minutes. And Mayo fans got their first taste of the potential in the Mayo forward line when in a quick, darting raid Tom Fitzgerald swung the ball to Des Griffith. The Claremorris lad lobbed the ball into the square where between J. J. Cribben and Willie McGee, it rolled into the net.

Down's tactics of not allowing Mayo to settle had there and then failed. They tried everything they could to get back on terms, and were, it must be said, unlucky not to have scored on a few occasions. But their shooting was off and when they were on target, Eugene Rooney saved brilliantly. By half time they had managed to level up, however.

Shortly afterwards they took the lead with a point and Mayo hearts sank when Down were awarded a penalty for a foul on Peter Rooney. But Joe Lennon's kick rebounded off an upright into the arms of Ray Niland.

Then, quite suddenly, the pattern of the game changed irrevocably. Mayo had a goal—a great goal by John Gibbons—a point by J. J. Cribben, and a magnificently fisted goal also by Cribben. Now they were sailing, playing their type of flowing, open football at their ease. They capped it with another goal near the end, by Tom Fitzgerald, and won by 4-7 to 0-10.

It was a wide margin, but they had to withstand many

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moments of pressure, before Down gave up and that was only at the final whistle. Every member of the team that day was a star. The names of Eugene Rooney, Seamus Hughes, Ray Prendergast, Ray Niland, John Carey, John Morley and Joe Earley were on the lips of everyone. They had succeeded where so many Mayo teams had failed.

So, too, were the names of the men in the middle of the field: P. J. Loftus and the man who replaced him, Sean O'Grady; and Joe Langan who had put so much into training and who starred in every game of the league. And up front flying Tom Fitzgerald, John Gibbons and Joe Corcoran; and in front of them, Des Griffith, gold-footed Willie McGee and J. J. Cribben. All of them were heroes that day.

For weeks Mayo fans basked in the sunshine of that victory. Now there would be more. And Mayo's reputation grew when in London they beat offaly a few weeks later by 3-12 to 3-7 in the Wembley Tournament. It entrenched them as firm favourites to win the All-Ireland title. And in truth they looked the best team in the country at the time.

MAYO OUT AT FIRST ATTEMPT

So everything was ready for their first round match against Roscommon at Tuam. The previous Sunday they were unimpressive in a challenge against Down at Crossmolina. But that would be a warning, would have them prepared.

All of us know what happened. On that awful day the reputation, so carefully and laboriously built up, lay stricken in a four-point defeat at the hands of Roscommon.

Roscommon saw Mayo that day as Mayo saw Kerry in the opening rounds of the League—an impregnable outfit. They had judged them on their League performances, but on this day Mayo were not in League form. Their hunger for the ball was absent. And they had not that little extra to pull out near the end when it could have been so important.

So there it ended. But this was still the best year in sixteen. And it would be wrong to cloud that success with what followed in the Championship.

Later on—in August—they beat New York in the first leg of the Croagh Patrick Cup at Castlebar and won the trophy for the first time when they won the second leg in New York. And in October they had a small measure of compensation when they beat Roscommon by 3-15 to 0-9 in the final of the Gael Linn Tournament.

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Camogie—future dim

by Vera Mannion

IT is regrettable that in this year 1970 the activities of camogie in Mayo have not been so slack since I first became acquainted with the game way back in 1954. At that time there were a great number of girls eager to play and become proficient in the finer arts of the game. At the present time we have two active clubs. With only two clubs we cannot hope to compete at inter-county level. True, at the beginning of the year four senior clubs and six junior clubs affiliated with the County Board and as I have already stated, with 1970 coming to a close we have two clubs in existence—Breaffy and Ballintubber, both of whom competed in the final of the senior championship. The big question is where did the other eight fall by the wayside.

We had one hundred and twenty girls anxious to play camogie, but due to the fact that no one seemed to be sufficiently interested enough in their respective areas to encourage them and get them off their feet they gave it up as a bad job. They had not sufficient knowledge of running a club. This is where I feel the G.A.A. clubs could be a great help. I also feel that wherever a G.A.A. club exists there should be a camogie club and both should work hand in hand to foster our Irish games. We can no longer go it alone and unless a 'merger' takes place very soon I cannot see camogie surviving not alone in Mayo, but in Connacht much longer.

If camogie was played in our schools it would not be so difficult when girls leave school to continue playing. In Mayo alone only five per cent of our schools are playing the game. The remaining 95 per cent refuse to let the pupils take a camogie stick in their hands. Some of them say it's too dangerous.

This year we were forced to make application to have our Mayo senior team regraded to junior status due to the fact that the standard was so poor within the county. In the first round of the Connacht Championship we were defeated by a young Roscommon side. With that I will conclude by wondering what we can look forward to in 1971?

Mayo Under 21 — Connacht champions (1970)

Under 21 campaign outstanding

by Tom Courell

IN a season which promised much, and yet realised so little title-wise for Mayo, I think the performance of the county under 21 team was perhaps one of the outstanding features.

This was the team, full of vigour and fight, which carried Mayo's main hopes for national success—following the defeat of the senior side—and it was a conclusion which, really was not without foundation.

Galway were their first victims—at Claremorris—and then they had a narrow victory over Roscommon at Roscommon in the Connacht final.

On to the semi-final where they encountered the might of a Cork side which had gained a tremendous reputation in winning out the Munster championship. The Southerners came to Castlebar on a Sunday in August for the All-Ireland semi-final. They were locked in combat with Mayo for sixty exciting minutes, and showing that extra, vital edge in stamina, they succeeded in going forward with two points to spare. The winning scores came in the dying seconds of the game when Mayo were slightly ahead.

Cork struck back and two long-range points put an end to Mayo's aspirations to win the county's second national title in the grade. There are many who still contend that Mayo could, and should have subdued their rivals. They based their conclusions on a number of factors. The first was that Cork had the benefit of a dream start being 1-1 up within three minutes, although they were playing against the wind. Mayo's defence was unhappy and uncomfortable at that stage and paid the price for being slow to settle.

However, Mayo, in trouble where fielding was concerned, switched their attentions to the wings. The move paid dividends and by the commencement of the second quarter they had taken the lead for the first team. But as the interval approached, Des Griffith tore through the Cork defence to push the ball into the net. Mayo were, I think it fair to say, rather unlucky in the drama which surrounded the second half. Battling for survival

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against the wind, they were denied three scores by the woodwork and a 14-yards free was squandered. Yet eight minutes from the end they were there with a chance. However, Cork's stamina, skill in the air and flair for accurate shooting from far out told in the end and Mayo's championship dreams were shattered.

These hopes had taken root months previously when Mayo were challenged by Galway at Claremorris. A dashing goal by Des Griffith was just the tonic Mayo needed that day to pull through. He made his mark in the first half taking his chance well and pushed Mayo into a 1-5 to 0-1 interval lead.

The home side were facing the wind on the resumption, but sterling work by the defence—after some early moments of indecision—kept the Galway attack under control and Mayo survived, winning by 1-8 to 0-5.

However the Connacht final would be a vastly different situation with Mayo meeting a strong Roscommon team at the latter's home field. Again it was the coolness of Claremorris player, Des Griffith, which helped Mayo to clear the hurdle. Six minutes from the final whistle he tapped over the vital point giving Mayo a 0-14 to 1-10 win. Despite the closeness of the final scores, Mayo just about deserved the laurels. With Sean O'Grady and Sean Kilbride forming an industrious partnership at midfield, Roscommon were forced to turn over 0-7 to 0-5 in arrears.

GALLANT CAMPAIGN

On the restart, it was a goal by Roscommon's Billy O'Hara which kept the interest of the home crowd alive. Midway through the second half, the home side had coasted four points clear. Then Mayo diminutive but powerful half backs, Brian O'Reilly and Gay Nevin, really came into their own. Seven minutes remained when Martin McIntyre fired over the equaliser, and then less than a minute later, the winning score flashed home.

Looking back on the championship one has to pay tribute to a fine performance that just failed. Cork took the national honours later, which in itself is testimony to the strength of Mayo in the grade.

It is fitting at a time like this that one should express a particular compliment to Gay Nevin, Brian O'Reilly, Des Griffith, Sean Kilbride and Sean O'Grady and one shouldn't attempt to minimise the contributions of Danny Dolan, Seamus Hughes, Richie Cosgrove, Pat Ward, Francie Lynott, Tony Holland, Tommy O'Malley, Martin McIntyre and Walter Henry, in mounting so forceful a bid to honour the green and red.

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Mayo bow out to champions

by "Marksman"

MAYO minor football team were really put to the test in the second half of the semi-final of the Connacht championship at Galway. There—matched against Roscommon—they had much the better of the first half when aided with the breeze. Moving with purpose and rhythm on the wide expanse of Pearse Stadium, the wearers of the green and red were the dominant side in the early stages. Twice the attack engineered movements which spread-eagled the Roscommon defence and allowed the Mayo forwards prod home goals. Ciaran Kelly was the marksman on the first occasion, after five minutes. Nine minutes later Vincent Kelly finished another movement by whipping the ball to the net.

These scores left Mayo on easy street as far as the opening thirty minutes were concerned, leading 2-5 to 0-0 at the interval. While Roscommon commenced the second half in fine fashion, it was Mayo with a further goal by Noel Joyce who made an early impression. He availed of a defensive slip by Roscommon full back Harry Keegan to flick the ball over the line. Up to the 16th minute Mayo, facing the strong wind, remained in control. But then they slipped. Pat Beegan—he was the main threat of the Roscommon forward division—goaled. Pat Gibbons had a second before Mayo's defence sealed off any openings that appeared in their blockade and Roscommon's rally, though well organised, was snuffed out. Full marks to Joe Dillon, Ger Conroy, Johnny Culkin, Norman McCarthy, Con Moynihan, Tom Moran, Vincent Kelly, Noel Joyce and Ray McNicholas for fashioning Mayo's win.

However, there was a different tale to be told when Mayo took on fancied Galway—the eventual All-Ireland champions—in the Connacht decider. It was the Tribesmen who held all the aces, coasting home 2-11 to 1-6 winners. In fact, Mayo were in dire difficulties inside four minutes of the throw-in. But really Mayo had no defence to offer. For the two Galway goals which did so much damage can be traced to a degree of carelessness in the rear section. Colm Rooney must, I am afraid, be considered as being at fault for the first. He advanced to meet a Galway raid

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and let the ball slip in over his hands. But before Mayo had time to regain their composure—in fact within ninety seconds—it happened again. The Galwegians broke through for a second goal, and added a number of points into the bargain. The winners were ahead 2-3 to 0-0 after twenty minutes before Tom Moran, with a point, broke the ice from a Mayo point of view. Ray McNicholas, Mayo's full forward helped to put a presentable appearance on the scoreboard when he crashed the ball to the net. But Mayo's 2-4 to 1-1 deficit was soon altered when, on the resumption, Galway, in five raids, fired over five points. Mayo were confused. And try though they did, they were unable to escape the inevitable going under by 2-11 to 1-6.

While Mayo had to bow the knee, it was not because of any deficiency in the displays of Joe Dillon, Bernie McGrath, Ger Conroy, Con Moynihan, Vincent Kelly, Tom Moran and Ciaran Kenny. They did their best but in the face of well marshalled Galway pressure it just was not good enough.

Mayo 'true ambassadors'

Irish American Club, Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Mulvey—On September 9th, 1970, the Mayo football team visited our nation's capital and were hosted by several members of our club. From all indications the players really enjoyed their stay in Washington and the people who kept them are still talking about how nice and courteous these men were.

By their actions these young men helped create much good-will for the Mayo team and for all Irishmen. We want you to know that you can be justly proud of your team both on and off the field. In our opinion they were the true ambassadors of of Ireland and are a real credit to their county and their home-land. One thing is for sure, the Mayo team will always be welcome in Washington.

Wishing your team every good luck for the 1971 season, I am sincerely yours.—*Sean D. Coakley*, President.

Michael Curley

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Junior title comes 'home'

by Christy Loftus

THE Mayo start to the campaign for the Connaught Junior Title came at Crossmolina when the opposition was provided by last year's champions. The Mayo team, on paper at least, looked a formidable one. It was built around such experienced performers as Ray Clarke (capt.), Seamus O'Connor, Christy Dolan, Johnny Burke, Sean O'Grady, John Gibbons, J. J. Cribben and Brian McDonald, all of whom had inter-county experience at senior level, and was bolstered by such able and established players as Pat McDonagh, Mick Lally, Gerry Connor, Tony Joyce, Willie Cribben, Billy Fitzpatrick and M. J. Connolly.

The Galway side was not too highly rated in this county. And so, surprisingly, it was Mayo who were struggling. The expected dominance failed to materialise as Galway made the running. Half time saw Mayo trailing by a point. They looked anything but hot favourites.

The second half, however, was not very old when Mayo came up with the flashes of brilliance which had been expected from such a talented line-up. The brilliance came in two (rather sickening for Galway) measures in a five-minute spell which first saw Brian McDonald ram home a great opportunist goal and then Ballintubber ace, Mick Lally, was on hand to finish another Mayo attack to the net.

With the champions disposed of Mayo were pitted against Roscommon in the Connacht final at Ballina. The home side was quietly favoured to win but the Roscommon men were by no means daunted by the line-up that faced them. On this occasion Brian O'Reilly had been drafted into the Mayo defence and playing on his own club pitch he used the occasion to turn in the first of a number of tremendous performances which have since established him on the senior side.

From the throw-in Mayo showed why they had been made favourites. For ten minutes they played copybook football that was crowned with as fine a goal as was scored in the Stephenites' Grounds for some time. It started with a well-placed clearance

Mayo -- Connacht junior champions



from corner back Seamus O'Connor who found half forward Gerry Connor. Connor drew the Roscommon centre half back to make room for John Gibbons to move through. The Louisburgh man carried the ball through to find Brian McDonald who, displaying the craft of his years in top-class football, drew the full back before passing to Billy Fitzpatrick who shot home.

After their early dominance Mayo seemed to rest on their laurels. They lost their grip on the mid-field proceedings and with Mel Flanagan, for the visitors, in menacing form, Roscommon gradually fought back into the game until almost half time. They broke through for a goal by full forward McHugh to cut Mayo's margin to three points. In the end Mayo were four points to the good (1-11 to 1-7), Sean O'Grady having been enthrusted with the taking of a last-minute penalty and opting for a 'safe' point rather than trying for the major score.

The Connacht junior crown was at home again and Mayo were out of the province already beating the All-Ireland trail. After a tough campaign Cork came through in Munster and the rebel county travelled to Charlestown for the semi-final with a big reputation. But before the semi-final came the ill-fated appearance of the Mayo senior side against Roscommon with the result that John Gibbons, Sean O'Grady and Brian Reilly were not eligible for the Cork encounter having played with the senior team. J. J. Cribben missed the senior disaster as he was being ordained a priest on the same day so that he alone of the 'big guns' remained to help out the side. Drafted in to fill the gaps were George Geraghty and Brendan O'Shea (both Castlebar) and Tony Bolton of Aughagower, while Tommy O'Malley, a promising Ballinrobe under 21 player was also given a place in the attack. Mayo were not as strong as we would have liked but with ground advantage it was hoped that they could spring a surprise. They played well but fortune did not favour them. George Geraghty had the ball in the net but the 'goal' was not allowed as the referee had earlier blown for a free.

Cork had pierced the Mayo defence for a goal which left Mayo trailing and hard though they tried they could not hit the front. Twice during the second half they came within a point of Cork and with ten minutes remaining they finally drew level. But in a great downpour Cork had the final say with a point to carry the day on a score of 1-6 to 0-8. The juniors had failed to take national honours but not without a brave fight.

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Mayo's Tour of U.S. and Canada

by John Carey

WHEN I was a young lad of about 9 or 10 I remember listening to the League Final on the radio between Mayo and New York. The game was being played in New York and all my "heroes" were playing—Sean Flanagan, Paddy Prendergast, John McAndrew and all the rest of them. I remember thinking then how wonderful it would be if I could play for Mayo when I grew up and travel to New York, Chicago and all those famous places with the Mayo team. At the time it seemed like a dream, but in September of this year it finally came true. Our first stop was in New York, where everything moves so fast and no one ever seems to relax. Here we were taken on a tour of the city and saw all the famous places—Harlem, the Bowery among others. Our first game was on Sunday at Gaelic Park against New York. The 'Park' that Sunday was like a match in Ballina or Castlebar, with all the Mayo people there. They gave us a great reception when we came on the field and again after the game. On Monday we had a repeat performance. Those first few days in New York were fairly hectic and none of us were very happy at Port Authority Terminal on Tuesday morning when moving out for Washington by bus.

Washington is a city of famous memorials, monuments and buildings. Here we visited the "White House" and the "Capitol". Later we visited the graves of John and Robert Kennedy.

Looking through the graves in Arlington it's amazing the number of Irishmen who have given their lives in the service of their adopted country, names like Walsh, Murphy, etc.

Next morning we moved out for Cleveland. It was at this stage of the tour we began to discover some "hidden talent" in the party. Tony Holland's rendering of *All kinds of Everything* and Ray Niland's *Kerry Recruit* became very popular. In Cleveland we got a warm reception where we met a lot of people from West Mayo—Ballycroy, Mulranny and Achill in particular. On the second Sunday we had our third game of the tour against a Cleveland selection. We had some slight difficulty before this

game trying to get football gear for Ray Niland and John Nealon — their bags had been stolen shortly after our arrival. We eventually got Ray Niland fixed up but John had to play in size 10 boots, and had a 'blinder'.

Our next stop was the "Windy City", famous for its gangsters and hoodlums. Our game against Chicago was played on an American football field. The goal posts had two cross bars; anything under the bottom one was a goal and over it a point. You also got a point for hitting the top cross bar, believe it or not!

On Friday we hit for Toronto. We stopped in Cleveland for a game and benefit dance for Fr. Padraic Joyce of Kilmaine, who is on his way to the missions. The dance was in the I.A. Club and a great night was had by all—if you don't believe me ask Johnny Biesty. At Buffalo we were entertained to 'Brunch' at the Y.M.C.A. club there. They had a very fine juvenile team there, made up mostly of Irish-Americans, and they intend to take them on a tour of Ireland in the near future. At the 'Peace Bridge', where we entered Canada, we had a little difficulty as Joe Langan had forgotten his passport. After negotiations with the Canadian officials they eventually allowed us through. At Niagara Falls we stopped to take some pictures and enjoy the beauty and splendour of the place. It was late on Saturday evening when we eventually reached Toronto.

HIGH STANDARD IN TORONTO

Our game against Toronto was the toughest of the tour and we were presented with lovely trophies at a dinner after the game. The standard of football was very high and with the Immigration Laws as they are at present it seems to be the coming place.

Next morning we hit back for New York. Those last few days were spent shopping and renewing "acquaintances".

The tour for me was a great experience. It was great to travel around with such a fine jolly bunch. We have all been playing together for the last few years but have never spent as much time together as in those three weeks and there weren't many dull moments. I'll always remember the warm and friendly receptions we received everywhere and what it meant to the people out there to meet and talk to someone from home. I cannot help but think that the Central Council in banning future trips gave little thought to the genuine followers in the U.S. who live for the game. I suppose we were lucky to have had our trip over before this ban, but I do hope that some time in the not too distant future I will get the chance to go back with a Mayo team.

It was Mitchels' year

by Tom Courell

"There are players from outside counties who have come to Castlebar, are living there and have made their homes there. "They are much better Castlebarmen and much better Mayomen than most and have done more for football in Mayo and Castlebar than most of the pseudo Castlebarmen or Mayomen who have called them 'foreigners'."

HARD-HITTING words; an extraction from the address of Ray Prendergast, team captain, at the victory celebrations last year in Castlebar to mark the 22nd success of the club in the Mayo senior football championship. The Ballintubber-born Mayo star was effectively dealing with those who had raised their voices in criticism of the make-up of the Mitchels first team.

And he might very well repeat those words this year, when again the toasts will be made to the Castlebar team on capturing the premier prize in Mayo football for the 23rd year. The sentiments would be identical. Castlebar's 'foreigners' have served the club well, exceptionally well. Their contribution to club football in Mayo has been put beyond question. Should one dare to smear their loyalty with rash comment, it would be an injustice of grave proportions.

The season just ended has to be labelled the year of the Mitchels, indisputably. They were by far the dominant force of the championship, even if one must turn a blind eye to one or two slight indiscretions on their part during the course of the competition.

The team's omissions were against Claremorris, at an early stage, and in the closing rounds, that embarrassing defeat at the hands of lowly Ballina, faced with the prospect of relegation. But from the first round, back in the sunny, warm days of June, the word was: Castlebar for the title. They gave full warning of their intentions in their initial appearance. That was against Burrishoole, a side whose form fluctuated alarmingly throughout the season. At Newport they were no match at all for Castlebar, going under by 4-11 to 2-1.

Garrymore -- County senior finalists



Former Dublin player, Brian McDonald, one of the most energetic of the Castlebar squad, saw to that. He dashed whatever hopes Burrishoole may have had by ramming in three goals during the game. He was one of the many stars who guided Castlebar safely over the first hurdle. Others to join in were Ray Prendergast, Tom Grier, Liam O'Neill, Gay Nevin. Burrishoole had their problems, it was obvious. Still Christy Loftus, Tony Holland, Joe Ryan and elusive Willie MGcee helped to brighten the gloom which settled on the western outpost.Castlebar had thrown down the challenge at that stage. It was a short-odds bet that the crown would stay put.

Those who held the notion were hastily reconsidering their views when the scoreline from the second round clash at Claremorris flashed around the county: Claremorris 2-5, Castlebar 0-6. What a clanger. And make no mistake about it, it was a win which the Claremorris men earned and fully deserved. They set the pace with an early goal by Tom Keane. It was confirmed with another early in the second half. Yet Castlebar, thrown into confusion by the unexpected bid, were unable to plug the gaping defects with team changes.

Brian McDonald, the hero of the opening game, has memories of the second, but they are not as pleasant. He will recall his anguish when his attempt to convert a penalty roared over the bar, and the fact that only minutes previously he had the ball in the net, only to have the score disallowed Still, there were no valid excuses forthcoming which could detract from the win of Claremorris, Cathal Cawley, Sean French, Johnny Farragher, Des Griffith, Arthur French and Tom Keane, were more than equal to the occasion.

That display was a source of revelation to the supporters of the Southern club. For Claremorris had only managed to hold Ballina to a draw in their first round tie. They had the better of the opening exchanges that day against the Stephenites. They looked all set for victory when Des Griffith hammered home two goals. Then, seemingly impregnable lines began to erode in the face of growing Ballina pressure. Flaws appeared. And Ballina stormed back to force a division of the spoils.

Mayo player, Griffith, was the star of the Claremorris 15. But Ballina also had their hero in young Brian O'Reilly, the Clare-born bank official. He was brilliant and gave a display which helped him win the subsequent favour of the Mayo senior selectors.

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Not indeed that he was forced to stand alone. He had Paddy O'Hora, Vinny Walsh, Martin Sheridan, Tommy Knight, Seamus O'Dowd and Walter Corcoran to lend a helping hand.

While all this was going on, Garrymore—the eventual finalists—were making their mark. They were pitted against Ballyhaunis at Hollymount and duly dished out the full treatment. They had 2-10 to 0-5 to spare at the end of the hour and never looked ruffled. Ballyhaunis were there with a chance—a slight one, admittedly—until Tom Cribben limped, injured, off the field. It was then left to Patsy Jennings, Tom Fitzgerald, Pat Curley and a few others to counter the pressure of Garrymore. They were completely outgunned. It was all so easy for Garrymore, with M. J. Connolly, Joe Mellett, Dec Heaney, Brian Healy, the Fitzpatricks and Walter Henry, doing all the right things.

But it was a little more difficult for Garrymore when they took on Ballina in the next round. They edged home 1-13 to 1-10 clear in a closely fought game. Admittedly, they were without the services of a number of regulars, yet it was little consolation to their followers at Hollymount, when they were in arrears 1-5 to 0-4 at the interval. A brace of points from Vincent Nally on the resumption, followed by a goal from Tony Hynes soon righted the position, and they were on their way.

Over at Newport Burrishoole were having a tough time shaking off Ballyhaunis. It took a burst of brilliance, seconds from the end by Willie McGee to give them the points. Just when things were looking blue for the home side, McGee dashed away from his guardians, and flashed the ball to the net. The score was decisive and the Burrishoole camp survived on a 2-6 to 1-3 scoreline.

Garrymore's first failure in the competition was at Castlebar, in the third round. There they were up against the Mitchels in what was really a sneak preview of the county final. Garrymore were naturally the underdogs but they showed up remarkably well in the commencement of the game. They had the better of the argument too scorewise, being three points ahead at the interval (2-6 to 2-3).

Later on Tommy O'Boyle, the veteran of the Castlebar side, showed he lacked nothing in opportunism, banging in two goals—he scored three in all during the game. These scores tipped the balance in favour of the locals who ran out comfortable winners. Garrymore—despite the useful work by Joe Mellett, Christry Dolan, Brian Healy, Willie Connolly, Walter Henry and the

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Burrishoole, had at that stage, an outstanding game, against Ballina. The game had been fixed for July 2 at Ballina. Burrishoole arrived at the appointed hour, but there were no Ballina players present. It was the day of the Galway-Sligo semi-final in the Connacht championship and they were all late arriving following the game, at Charlestown. But when they did make their way to James Stephens Park, they were on their own. Burrishoole players had waited over thirty minutes, and with referee Dick Conaboy they packed up and left. When the matter was referred to at a meeting of the County Board, Burrishoole were in the driver's seat. The points were theirs for the taking. However, an unsuccesful bid was made to have the game played and to have the matter decided on the field.

With the points tucked under their belts, Burrishoole were drawn in the semi-final against Castlebar. Castlebar were slow to settle and Burrishoole were more than just in touch. Then disaster struck for the Burrishoole men. Tony Loftus had to retire injured. His midfield colleague Mickey Kelly later joined him on the wings. With the main bulwarks of Burrishoole's challenge removed Castlebar went into action and romped home 2-13 to 2-6 winners.

This win helped in a way to overcome the embarrassment which the Mitchels had to endure at Ballina. It appeared to be only a formality to deal with the Stephenites, whose record in the championship had been poor. The outcome was sensational. The Castlebar side lost by a point (2-8 to 2-7).

But that indiscretion was a memory when Castlebar trotted out onto O'Hara Park, Charlestown, to meet Garrymore in the county final. The success which they had some time previously over the Southerners was something to be overlooked; ignored. Garrymore in round one was a completely different proposition to Garrymore in the county final.

It proved to be a wise deduction. It was Garrymore who called the tune for much of the game. They took the lead, lost it, went ahead again and were hauled back again at half time. It seemed they were pushing forward again by three points at a vital stage, the commencement of the second half. Perhaps it was the thought of having victory within their clutches that caused Garrymore to panic.

There was a sudden change in their performance. The rhythm so freely expressed up to then was rudely interrupted. Ray Pren-

dergast moved to midfield to offset the powerful thrusts of Danny Dolan. Castlebar's forces were gradually hauled together. Goals from Brian McDonald, Joe Langan and Benny McHale punctured the aspirations of the challengers. And Castlebar swept home with eight points to spare 4-9 to 0-13.

As the congratulations verbrated from all corners of the East Mayo venue acclaiming Mayo's newly-crowned football kings, there was a special ovation for players Gay Nevin, Brendan O'Shea, Pierce Conway, the Clarkes, Liam O'Neill, Ray Prendergast, Brian McDonald, Joe Langan and Benny McHale who had done so much to bring about the success. It seemed only proper that Garrymore's Pa Connolly, Dec Heaney, Brian Healy, T. J. Farragher, Willie Connolly, Walter Henry, Billy Fitzpatrick and Martin Fitzpatrick were also remembered as they had stood firm to the last in defiance.

The Castlebar side that day was: Paul Gavin; Pierce Conway, Ray Clarke, Brendan O'Shea; Gay Nevin, Frank Reynolds, Tom Grier; Joe Langan (1-0), Liam O'Neill; Benny McHale (1-1), Ray Prendergast (0-2), Johnny McCormack; Brian McDonald (2-2), Micksie Clarke (0-3), Tommy O'Boyle (0-1).

Garrymore: M. J. Connolly; Pa Connolly, Joe Mellett, Tom Tierney; Dec Heaney, Christy Dolan, Brian Healy; Danny Dolan (0-2), T. J. Farragher; Martin Fitzpatrick (0-4), Tony Hynes, Willie Connolly; Billy Fitzpatrick (0-4), Vincent Nally (0-1), Walter Henry (0-2).

But on reflection it must be conceeded that the championship was not a 'championship' in the traditional sense. There was a definite lack of bite; the football rarely crept from mediocre standard and it did little really to coax back to the venues the missing thousands who had once flocked to watch the exchanges in Mayo's premier event. Perhaps the sub-committee sitting at the moment to deal with the ills of club football in Mayo will come up with the answers. At least, let us hope so.

And, finally, who were the real heroes of the championship. Castlebar supporters would no doubt put forward the name of team captain Ray Prendergast. A popular nomination indeed. For it was Ray who by his unyielding displays around the middle of the field so often steadied Castlebar when their resistence seemed to wilt. Others who greatly impressed me during the season were: Tom Fitzgerald (Ballyhaunis), Brian O'Reilly (Ballina), Christy Dolan (Garrymore), Willie McGee (Burrishoole), Des Griffith (Claremorris).

Handball in a healthy state

by 'Tosser'

IT'S ironic perhaps that, this year, when handball dominated the sporting scene in Ireland for a week with the World Handball Championships being played at Croke Park, Mayo should have done so badly on the national scene. As regards winning Connacht and All-Ireland titles 1970 was Mayo's worst year since '59 when Eamonn Connolly and Seamus Fleming won the provincial softball doubles. This year the only Connacht title to come Mayo's way was the junior softball singles title which won won by Brian Colleran of Charlestown.

But in the ten years from 1960 Mayo proved itself one of the foremost counties in the country in handball. During that decade the county won the incredible total of 52 Connacht titles and no less than eight All-Ireland titles. And as well as that the legendary Mickey Walsh (Charlestown) together with John Eddie Walshe (Castlebar) won the over 40's All-Ireland in '67 and Mickey teamed up with M. Groarke the following year to complete the double. Also brought back to the county, again by Mickey Walsh, was the All-Ireland Gael-Linn title in '68. And if Walsh was the wizard of Mayo senior handball during the decade he never had much to spare over Newport's Peter McGee (both of whom combined to win the All-Ireland senior softball doubles—the highest honour in the game—in '66), or Paddy Bollingbrook (of Castlebar and Swinford) who also reached his peak at this time. Any of these three at that time could well have represented Ireland.

This year a record number of 11 clubs—Ballinrobe, Balla, Charlestown, Killala, Ballyheane, Swinford, Ballina, Castlebar, Newport, Foxford and Hollymount—took part and it was heartening to see newcomers Killala win the juvenile title with C. Quinn and T. Cawley displaying plenty of craft to take the honours. As so often in the past, Newport dominated the games, winning all the minor, with Padraic McCormac and Gerry Moran, the junior with Martin Kelly and Peadair McGee and the senior titles going to Peter McGee. The intermediate title was won by T. Tracy and C. Horan of the recently-revived Ballinrobe club.



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Played football with rag balls in Mountjoy

by Paddy Mullaney

FROM its very foundation the G.A.A. was really national in its character and its outlook. In accepting the honour of being first patron of the new organisation, Archbishop Croke left no one in doubt as to what he hoped for from the young men of Ireland. He deplored the gradual assimilation of the Gael by the West Britons and their slavish imitation of the games and pastimes of the foreigners to the almost complete neglect of their own. His clear call and the untiring efforts of the first secretary, Michael Cusack, wrought a remarkable change in Irish youth. They abandoned their habitual gait and set about organising and practising their own games and athletic pastimes. They went into the fields with their green flags with the gold harps. The resurrected the discarded fife and drum bands and the stirring martial strains were being heard again. When the Gaelic League was founded they joined it and learned Irish.

They were given every help by the I.R.B. who knew that a disciplined and athletic manhood would be a vital need should a blow be struck again for the Old Land. Egan, Boland and Nally were three who were of great assistance to Cusack in his initial efforts to form the Association. Of Nally, Cusack said: "No layman gave me greater help than Nally". But even if the great national stirring was in the minds of the young men, it took some time for universal success to be visible. Communication, as we know it, just did not exist. The motor car had yet to come. So had the telephone, radio, television and rapid transport. Only one or two weekly papers came to each village and these passed from hand to hand. The side-car was the principle means of transport for teams and spectators. So we must not wonder at the slow development of our Association in its early years. But the seed was sown and the national spirit would never sink so low again. From generation to generation it would go on in ever-increasing strength. G.A.A. clubs were proud to be named after national patriots.

So it was in the early years of this century and when the

North decided that they would resist by force of arms the giving of Home Rule to Ireland, the young men of the South then drilled and armed so that they, too, would be ready should it become necessary to resort to physical force to secure even a limited measure of freedom for the nation.

Then came 1914 and the First World War in Europe. Belgium, a small country, was overrun by Germany. Britain and France took the part of Belgium and soon all of Europe was locked in a titanic death struggle. Newspapers, more common now, called on the young men of Ireland to go and fight for small nations. The politicians preached the same doctrine from platforms throughout the land and thousands of our finest gave their lives on the Marne and the Somme, in Gallipoli and in Flanders fields. Home Rule was postponed by Britain.

But some there were who preached another doctrine. Men, who, up to then, were not generally known—Clarke, Pearse, Connolly, McBride, McDonagh, McDermott, Ceannt and others—professors, teachers, poets, dreamers—men who saw a vision and who decided that a sacrifice must be made to bring back the wandering spirit of the nation to its right papth. Those who live through an era are not always best able to make a just assessment of its historical significance. Yet I think it is true to say that at the time of the 1916 Rising it was considered unpopular. As far as the rest of the country outside Dublin it was unexpected and unprepared for. It was secret and of necessity it had to be.

Then the disagreements at headquarters. McNeill pressing for postponement. Clarke, Pearse and the others insisting on immediate action, believing that delay would mean the arrest of the leaders. There was also the tragedy at Ballykissane Quay which resulted in no contact with the Aud, the German vessel bringing arms to the Kerry coast. But all these were known generally only months later. On Easter Monday the crowds at Fairyhouse Races were blissfully unaware of the events in Dublin, even when halfway through the card, the R.I.C. were collected and marched off towards the city. Even when patrons had to walk in from Ashtown because the railway line was torn up, they could not believe it was anything more than fun and games. From Tuesday the iron curtain was down on all news from the city for well over a week. Just rumours.

Outside of Dublin there was no uprising. A few in Galway under Mellows; a small band in Wexford, and a few in Louth. Domnall O Buacalla led his section, which included some county

footballers and a member of the County Board, from Maynooth to the G.P.O. In Mayo Dick Walsh and members of the Balla football club seized rifles at Balla on the following Sunday not knowing that Pearse had already surrendered. Later Dick, who was then Chairman of Mayo G.A.A., was to visit every club in the county and many in Sligo and Roscommon, organising and recruiting the I.R.A. All this was, however, yet to come. The Rising was over and the prisoners being marched under escort down the quays on their way to English jails had no one to cheer them. I tried to speak to Tom Mangan of Maynooth as he was being marched along to find out if any of the boys were wounded or killed. I was jeered at and booked for speaking to one of such a disgraceful body. With some there was admiration to a certain extent for the bravery of those men who held out against the might of England for a full week. But they were considered foolish. Some even went as far as to say that it was a stab in the back for Britain at a time when she was sorely tried in Europe. And this, while so many Irishmen were giving their lives for small nations. A section of the press called for severe measures for the leaders.

No one, however, was prepared for the severity which followed. No prisoner-of-war treatment for the Irish rebels! The Germans, who, we were told, had been guilty of every outrage against civilisation were treated, when captured, according to the Geneva international code. Now came the change. If there was no general uprising and no sympathy with the Rebellion, the executions changed all that. What hypocrisy on Britain's part to pretend sympathy with small nations and now to wreak vengeance on a small nation and put to death men who fought honourably for their own land. Those leaders wanted only Ireland's freedom. Day after day the names of executed leaders were published, anger and disillusionment spread over the whole country and beyond, to the trenches in France and even to India. It resulted in an eruption of national feeling unbelievable in such a short time. Names hitherto unknown became household words. The poems and the speeches of the executed men were nearned by heart. The sacrifice of Dublin rang through the civilised world.

By the time the prisoners were released the young men were ready for a really determined effort once and for all to cut the connection with England. A tumultuous welcome was accorded to the prisoners on their arrival home. From then on to 1921 were the years when the G.A.A. showed their mettle. The Association

was the great reservoir from which the resurgent I.R.A. was drawn. In every county they organised, drilled and prepared for the struggle. Captains of teams became captains of companies. County Board officers met to plan military operations. Games were played in spite of prohibition. During those years Ireland taught the world guerilla warfare. The national pulse never throbbed with greater strength. They withstood every outrage of the Black and Tans and gave back blow for blow. By the time the Truce came English law no longer ran in Ireland.

Even though many died or suffered imprisonment the national spirit was not broken. They played football with rag balls in the exercise yards of Mountjoy, Kilmainham and Portlaoise. And in camps, campetitions were arranged. One of these comes back to memory. It was in Hare Park. Our hut was in for the final. The trophies were Claddagh rings made from two-shilling pieces and beautifully engraved. The pitch was without even one blade of grass with two deep muddy pools at the goals. We had three All-Ireland players on our team. Even so we were a point down towards the end. But in the last minute Bertie Hawney from Kerry dashed the ball through the sludge and scored a goal, ruining his only pants in the effort. Said he: "Our hut had to win lads, because I had flogged the rings to the military during the last couple of weeks."

The Civil War caused a bitterness between former comrades not equalled in Irish history even by that at the downfall of Parnell. Again, however, the G.A.A. did more than any other organisation to heal the wounds this caused. The late General Secretary, Padraig O Caomh, who himself had been in Parkhurst Prison, did much to bring together in friendship Gaels whom war has sundered.

This coming year is the Golden Jubilee of 1916. The G.A.A. will be expected to organise memorial functions in ever county ground. Croke Park will be taken over for the major feature. No stadium could be a more fitting venue. Named after Archbishop Croke who gave the G.A.A. its first charter. The Cusack stand is named after the untiring and dedicated first secretary. The Nally Stand perpetuates the memory of a Fenian who helped Cusack and who died a martyr's death in Mountjoy. Last we have the Hogan Stand in memory of the Tipperary player who fell when the Black and Tans machine-gunned players and spectators on Bloody Sunday, symbolising for all time the part played by the G.A.A. in Ireland's Fight for Freedom.

Westport junior champs —after 33 years

WESTPORT are junior champions. In taking the title with a splendid win over Garrymore in the county final they put an end to the barren 33-year spell during which they had so many frustrating moments as they strove to become once more a force in Mayo football. And it was no easy road that Westport took. Having come through in West Mayo with flying colours—though not without a tough campaign—they were still presented with some daunting obstacles. The first of these was provided by Kiltimagh in the semi-final.

The young Kiltimagh side, backboned by the winning under 21 team had been groomed for stardom and their reputation was well known, their prowess respected. At McHale Park, however, they were slow to get into their stride and Westport, taking advantage of this laxity, went 1-7 up before Kiltimagh opened their account. At the interval Westport were in a commanding position, leading by 1-8 to 0-2. On the turn-over a completely revitalised Kiltimagh side made Westport fight every inch of the way. An on-form Ray McNicholas harried the Westport defence into a number of mistakes and broke through for a goal and a brace of points to narrow the gap. In the hard-hitting final twenty minutes it was touch and go as each side strove for victory and in the process turned up some fine football.

The Westport defence, however, in which Padraic Cunningham played his best ever game, refused to crack. Despite severe pressure Cunningham, along with Michael Higgins, Mick Holland, Sean Scott and Sean Langan stuck to the task. Patsy Kelly and Pat Reynolds were also in fine form at midfield while the attack, in which John Reynolds, Padraic Bruen, Michael Gannon and Padraic Cox were always prominent, kept the Kiltimagh rearguard busy. So it was that though Don Dillon, Jim Gallagher, Willie Mallee (in defence), Seamus Carolan (midfield), Ray McNicholas, Ciaran Fallon, Christy Feerick and Ciaran Heneghan (in attack) all played splendidly, Kiltimagh went under.

Westport were through to await the clash of Garrymore and

Westport -- Mayo junior champions

Ballycroy to see who they would face in the final. Ballycroy had surprised everyone when they came through in North Mayo to win their first ever title. It was wondered if they would have sufficient experience to match Garrymore. It turned out that they did not. Their young side displayed plenty of craft and combination but the cooler heads and quiet confidence of Garrymore told in the end. At half time Garrymore had asserted their authority and with T. J. and Norman Farragher dominating centre field, it was obvious they were going to win through.

Their defence, with Matt Grier, John Wooley and Paddy Nally in fine form, remained steadfast under the Ballycroy pressure while the quick-thinking attack, in which I. P. Lambe, Patsy Higgins and Ger Farragher were prominent, chalked up the necessary scores to win by 3-11 to 1-8. Though heavily defeated Ballycroy have no need to be despondent. They had fine performers in Sean Sullivan, Frank Lynott and Dave Gildea in defence, Michael O'Sullivan and Frank Masterson at midfield and Michael Patton, Ciaran O'Sullivan and Michael Moran in attack. Next year they may have the experience to go a step further.

So, finally, the stage was set and the finalists took the field at Ballinrobe. But, sadly, the ingredients were not quite right and the game flopped. The demands on Garrymore were too much and they failed to match up to the ability of the Westport side. In a rather one-sided encounter which saw them defeated by 2-11 to 1-4, Garrymore had little to offer but courage and determination. Against Westport this was not sufficient.

NORTH *by Terry Reilly*

Ballycroy were the king-pins

For sheer determination alone, hats off to Ballycroy, the king-pins of junior football in North Mayo this year. In an area so badly hit by emigration it is some feat to win the divisional championship final. That feat is even more remarkable when one assimilates the wealth of competition there was for this crown and the fact that hardy warriors, Bangor, were their opponents in the final.

This season's campaign in North Mayo was possibly the best

Garrymore -- South champions (junior finalists)

on record. Never before did so many teams compete and never before was the competition so open. Fourteen teams participated: Ballycroy, Bangor, Belmullet, Kilcommon, Lacken, Cooneal, Moygownagh, Killala, Ardnaree, Ballina, Crossmolina, Lahardane, Bonniconlon and Ánockmore. Teams like Lacken, Bangor, Ballina and Bonniconlon were fancied early in the competition but while Lacken and Ballina fell away Kilcommon and Ballycroy absorbed several tense moments. Ballycroy got into the semi-finals with Bangor and Bonniconlon by pulling out the stops when it mattered, while Kilcommon, another club severely hit by emigration, had to play two games on the one day to ease themselves into the remaining berth.

In the semi-finals at Crossmolina on October 11, Bangor demolished Kilcommon's challenge in the second half with a tour de force which carried them to a 4-6 to 2-5 triumph. It was a display which earmarked them as fancied runners for the title. In the other semi-final Ballycroy were fortunate to get away with a couple of near shaves against Bonniconlon but in the end they had four points (0-9 to 0-5) to spare. It wasn't a very impressive performance and for the final Bangor's experience and ability to rise to the big time appeared to tip the scales against the Ballycroy boys.

But on the following Sunday Ballycroy showed their real mettle! Going for their first title in their short three years existence (they had competed in the West Mayo division for the previous two years) they gave a wonderful display of fast, attacking, colourful football. Bangor, seasoned campaigners that they were, were outclassed and at half-time the writing was on the wall for them when they trailed by five points (0-2 to 0-7). In the end Ballycroy won 1-13 to 1-4. . . and that night the bonfires blazed along their triumphant journey home.

In the county semi-final at Castlebar Garrymore's strength proved the deciding factor and the North Mayo representatives failed in their bid to reach the decider. But no one could forget their march through their own division, nor could one cast aside their enterprising brand of football in the final. The standard they displayed was of the highest order and if the battle against the curse of emigration can be won Ballycroy will have a really fine side in a couple of years time.

It is essentially a young side and will mature into a match for the best. Players like Frank Lynott, a member of this year's under 21 which won the Connacht championship, captain Noel

Kiltimagh -- East Mayo champions



Masterson, full back Sean O'Sullivan, his two brothers, Michael (who played with the Mayo senior side about five years ago as a half back) and Kieran (a member of the Mayo minor team two years ago), Peter Masterson, Dave Gildea, Michael Padden, the young McManamen brother, Hugh (15) and Billy (16), are obviously going to be around for years and the experience which they picked up on their way to the divisional title is going to stand them good stead for the battles ahead.

Yes, a memorable year for the brave hearts from Ballycroy!

SOUTH *by Sean Rice*

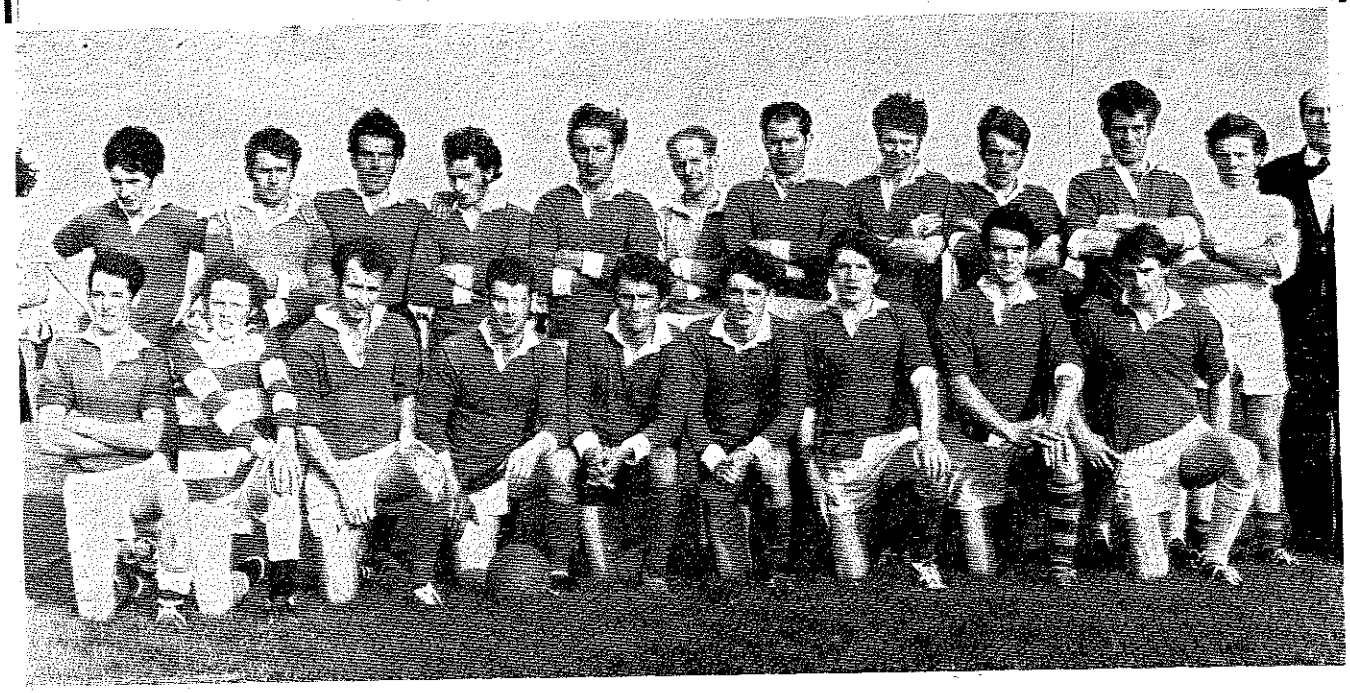
Garrymore emerge after tough campaign

The South Mayo junior championship was in two sections—a losers' and winners'. The eight teams played off to decide these sections and the winning teams—Ballinrobe, Garrymore, Kilmaine and Irishtown were thus grouped together. Shrule, St. Coman's, Bekan and Mayo Abbey formed the losers' section. It was a knockout competition. But they were not forgotten. While the others were battling for supremacy in the championship the losers were occupied with the O'Mara Cup competition which is still in progress.

Garrymore and Shrule met in one semi-final of the championship. It was a cracker. Garrymore, more polished and controlled, had paved a victory patch in the first half, it seemed. In six minutes they were two goals up, scored by Jimmy Walsh—one from a penalty. It was a dream start. But Shrule thundered back and after Paddy Joe Sullivan scored their goal the exchanges became tough and thrilling. Garrymore somehow lost their grip, and their concentration and by half time were only one point ahead.

But they were still a safe bet. The pace Shrule set immediately after the break would fizzle out, it was thought, and Garrymore would saunter on. It did not happen that way. For when Shrule began to lag they moved out Frank Walsh from full back to centre half forward—an audacious switch, that worked. Shrule took the lead, were pegged back again. And just when it seemed they might take it finally, they began to waste chances, and in the end no one yielded. They had to meet again.

Ballycroy -- North Mayo champions



In the meantime, Irishtown were disposing of Mayo Abbey in the other semi-final. This, too, was a thriller. They are young clubs with young players and their match had not the same magnetism as that of the longer established teams. And yet the football standard was as high, and exciting as that in the other semi-final. Only a point separated them in the end, just one kick of a ball between two evenly matched teams. Mayo Abbey bowed out, but they showed through the football of players like Sean McNamara, Christy Dunne, Martin Gill, Tommy Hurst and Brendan McDonagh that soon victory will come their way.

The other semi-final was replayed; not the same thrilling encounter but still riveting the attention. This time Garrymore made no mistakes. They blueprinted a plan to stop Shrule's big men, and succeeded. There was only a point between them but it was enough. The Farragher brothers, J. P. Lambe, John Woolley, Jimmy Walshe, Patsy Higgins and Matt Grier were more determined this time. Shrule perhaps made the mistake of having lined out as they finished in the drawn game, particularly with Frank Walsh on the 'forty'. Not that he played badly, but he was not the same inspiring figure. Still they tried everything, and one will not easily forget the displays of Tom Payne, Denny McDonagh, Tom Gibsey, Frank Mortimer, Jimmy Martin and Frank Walsh, but their luck was out. It ran out in the closing minutes of the first game.

So it was an Irishtown-Garrymore final. And Garry' were firm favourites. They had those tempering battles with Shrule behind them. Irishtown could hardly be expected to have the same power or craft or experience as their hardened opponents. They went close enough though. Irishtown were in no ways over-awed. They had young players in action—J. Prendergast, P. McGrath, S. Sweeney, M. McGrath, G. Griffin, G. Prendergast and P. McGrath, to name but a few—and all of them acquitted themselves remarkably, all of them promising great things soon.

It was only in the last five minutes that Garrymore grabbed victory. And it was a goal by the youngest player on the team, Michal Cunningham, that sealed it. But it was a deserved victory, if a hard-earned one. There can be little doubt that Garrymore were the best club in the county this season, and the manner in which each of their teams was turned out was a credit to them. For full back Matt Grier it was a reward long overdue. That medal had eluded him for many years and it is ironic that in the autumn of a great career it should have been the youngest player

Bangor Erris -- North Mayo finalists



on them team that made that medal possible for him. Of course everyone on the team played his part, more notably the Farragher brothers, T, J., Norman and Ger, J. P. Lambe, Jimmy Walshe, John Woolley, Paddy Nally, Michael Cunningham and Patsy Higgins.

EAST *Michael O'Connell*

Kiltimagh go on to take another title

In 1970 the G.A.A. in East Mayo continued to thrive, and while there was a noticeable decline in the standard of junior football, this was only to be expected as no fewer than four of the seven clubs involved had to field second-string sides. It is indeed a tribute to the eventual winners, Kiltimagh, that their team was one of the youngest on record, and fielded apart altogether from the intermediate side won through, but not alone that, the team members more than compensated for a dull desultory competition with some sparkling football in the concluding stages which clearly showed that there is no dearth of talent in the Raftery country.

Since the advent of the intermediate football championship, junior football in East Mayo seems to lack the appeal of a decade ago, and this is being reflected very much in the decline in attendance figures. Certainly, the new system is giving a wider scope to more and more younger players to don a club jersey in the junior grade, but for my own part, whether it is a touch of nostalgia, or a failure to break with tradition, nothing will ever recapture for me the same tense expectancy and excitement that prevailed during the concluding stages of the Eastern junior tests a while back.

Charlestown, Ballyhaunis, Swinford, Kiltimagh, Ballyvary, Aughamore and Ballaghaderreen affiliated for the 1970 East Mayo junior football championship, the preliminary rounds of which accentuated the decline in standard, but nevertheless it was honest to goodness fare fought out with fervour and tenacity. Eventually Swinford v Ballyvary and Kiltimagh v Aughamore were drawn to contest the semi-finals played at Charlestown on the September 6, and the football in the first semi-final between Ballyvary and Swinford was as dull as the weather which prevailed.

Ballyvary -- East Mayo finalists



Ballyvary won the game by 3-7 to 2-7 after Swinford, with practically the last kick of the game, had a goal disallowed by referee Mick Higgins (Kiltimagh), but Swinford, who in the first half were awarded two penalties had every chance to win in the course of the game against moderate opposition, but failed to turn their chances to account. For the record the half time score was Ballyvary 2-6, Swinford 2-3.

In the second semi-final, a first-minute goal by Aughamore failed to upset their more sprightly rivals, Kiltimagh, who, after missing a number of scoring chances, still managed to lead by 1-7 to 2-2 at the half-way stage. In the second half, Kiltimagh went on a scoring spree, and the final score (Kiltimagh 3-16, Aughamore 2-4) was a true indication of the clear superiority of the winners.

So the stage was set for the East Mayo final at the same venue on the following Sunday, September 13, and Kiltimagh, who were expected to win with something to spare duly obliged their supporters by trouncing Ballyvary on the score 4-9 to 0-5. Kiltimagh looked good in the first half, but were unable to translate their superiority into scores, and made heavy work of scoring 1-4 to Ballyvary's 0-2 at the interval. Indeed it was not until the Kiltimagh mentors made strategic positional changes just before the interval, that Kiltimagh unleashed their full power. Kiltimagh really opened the sluice gates in the second period, and their forwards made inroads through a porous Ballyvary defence almost at will, to build up an unassailable lead giving a delightful display of high-class forward play into the bargain.

The brightest Kiltimagh start to emerge from the championships was Kieran Sloyan who seems to me to have all the wherewithall that a top-class footballer requires. His other Mayo minor Kiltimagh team mates Colm Rooney (goal) Kieran Heneghan and Ray McNicholas also showed top-class form, and no doubt much more will be heard about them in the future. Others on the Kiltimagh side to catch the eye were Willie Evans an astute attacker; Willie Mallee, a stalwart half back; Seamus Carolan, a tall rangy midfielder, as well as Kieran Fallon, J. Gallagher and D. Roughneen.

Few players have given more loyal service to a club than has Veitch McCombs from Ballyvary, and he was once again the manistay of the side. He tried harder than anyone else to get the Ballyvary players working smoothly, but it was soon evident that the task of coping with the opposition was beyond them, and

Breafly -- West Mayo finalists



McCombs, too, realised from an early stage that defeat was inevitable, such was the comparison between the sides. Pat Roche, Vincent Hall, Andy Walsh, Kevin McMorrow, Noel Golden, Denis Canning (goal), Kevin McNicholas, Des Lavelle and Sean Smyth were others who fought an uphill battle in gallant style for the losers.

WEST ——

by Christy Loftus

Record number of teams participated

The major interest in the West Mayo junior championship centred almost inevitably on Westport. For the past six years they had been involved in the final stages of the competition but had always failed to come up trumps. And from the commencement of the campaign they were put under the spotlight when three of their key members were suspended following their home clash against Tourmakeady. It was an inauspicious start and it appeared that their chances of reaching the last four were extremely slim. For this year there was a record number of teams participating and with Breaffy and Achill recently returned to junior football from the intermediate ranks competition was keen. There was also a new team, Parke, who were to make the headlines for themselves, as well as a revived Louisburgh team that could be counted on to acquit itself well.

Westport, however, steeled themselves for the battle ahead and their adversity was turned to advantage as a new and almost fanatic determination gripped the team. After five series of games they were closely matched with Achill and Breaffy at the top of the points table while Castlebar, Parke, Louisburgh, Tourmakeady and Burrishoole all battled bravely for recognition and a place in the final shake-up. Castlebar's early failure to fulfill fixtures told against them and they fell by the wayside. Louisburgh made a late burst with notable wins over Achill, Westport and Castlebar, but despite the best efforts of John Gibbons, John Morahan, Bernie Winters and the McCabe brothers they failed to make up enough ground.

Parke and Burrishoole were left with a vital clash at McHale Park. Three Burrishoole stalwarts, Pat Cannon, John Kilcoyne and Tommy Moran, had earlier helped their senior squad to a hard-

fought victory over Garrymore and were in no condition for another tough hour's football. The lively Parke team, with Jimmy Lawless, M. J. Connor, Sean Hopkins, Christy Murphy and the Dunne brothers, John and Padraic, in good form, completely over-ran Burrishoole by 2-12 to 1-7. Parke had one more game to play and victory could see them into the semi-finals. But that clash was with Westport and the 'Port was not in accommodating mood when the sides clashed. Parke were out and the stage was set for the semi-finals. Westport were drawn against Tourmakeady and keen rivals from older days Breaffy and Achill qualified to meet in the second semi-final.

Westport were favourites for their clash and were in demolishing mood. Unlucky Tourmakeady did not know what hit them. Trojan work by Sean Sullivan, Sean O'Shea, Mylie O'Malley, Mick Power, Tom Garvey and Sean Cronin was not sufficient to hold the Westport men who won by 4-9 to 1-4. Before the second semi-final was half way through Breaffy had established their mark on the game and it was obvious that Achill were out of their depth. They had solid workers in Pat Kilbane, Michael English, Eugene Masterson, Liam McCann, Paddy Corrigan and Sean Healy, but a positive blitz by Breaffy shortly after the restart put paid to all their good work and Breaffy came through to meet Westport on a score of 2-12 to 0-9.

There was a record crowd at Westport for the final and Breaffy were made slight favourites to carry the day. They justified their favouritism in the opening half when they over-ran Westport to chalk up 1-5 to Westport's single score—a goal. But if Westport were to be held to a single score in the first half then it was Breaffy's turn in the second. On the resumption Westport dominated completely. A point by Jackie Gibbons signalled a scoring spree that saw the 'Port draw level in a matter of minutes and then completely annihilate Breaffy to the tune of 3-9 to 1-6 at the final whistle. Breaffy had tried hard and Des Jennings, Henry Joyce, Kevin and Vincent Jordan, Paul Fahy, Jack Sheridan and Ollie McNicholas displayed plenty of craft and ability but to no avail. Westport's day of glory was carved out on great displays of hard, rugged but always fair performances from Sean Scott, Micahel Higgins, Sean Langan, Patsy Kelly, Michael Gannon, the Reynolds brothers, Pat and John, Padraic Cox and the evergreen Padraic Bruen.

For the 'Port it was a fruitful culmination to the hard work they had put into training. But even greater things were to come.

'Lack of dedicated men to hurling'

by Fintan Pepper

MAYO hurling activity in the year under review was confined to three competitions, one within the county for our seniors, while our minors and juveniles took part in Connacht championships. The senior competition in which teams from Westport, Ballinrobe, Knockmore, Castlebar, Ballyheane and Tooreen took part was the most successful for some years. Westport, after victories over Knockmore and Castlebar, were awarded the championship after Ballyheane had failed to field a team in the final. Thus Westport captured the Hughes Cup for the second year in succession. Westport's triumph is all the more praiseworthy as over 50 per cent of their players are natives of the area. Until such time as clubs can field teams comprised of mainly local players the future of the game can not look good.

Our juvenile and minor teams each had one outing and tasted defeat at the hands of Sligo. While defeat was our lot, the standard of play in both games clearly indicated the potential which exists amongst our youth. They proved that if given the proper encouragement they could form the base on which the future of Mayo hurling would be assured. Unfortunately the efforts of the Coisde Iomana have not brought the desired results. In fact the Coisde has ceased to exist in the county and responsibility has fallen on the County Board to foster and maintain the game. The failure of Coisde Iomana raises the question of the future of hurling in the county. The Coisde should have achieved a position which would assure the future of the game. That the Coisde has failed is due to the lack of sufficient dedicated men.

I think it is clear that a cloud hangs over the game and its future. We must make some attempt to find a solution. The first step is the organisation at local level, of coaching schemes for our juveniles. Perhaps the appointment of a full-time officer in counties such as Mayo should be considered. The juveniles, once their interest has been aroused, should be encouraged to the full, and given plenty of competition at juvenile and later at minor levels.

Kiltimagh -- Mayo under 21 champions



Suspicion is seeping in

FEW saw the juvenile championships. Not that many cared one way or the other. For these competitions are almost always left on the shoulders of the few club stalwarts who do care; the few who at great inconvenience to themselves round up the young lads and organise them for the games; the few on whom no glittering laurels rest. It is a pity because juveniles provide keen and honest endeavour and it is here they are moulded for the future. Of late, unfortunately, victory in these grades is being sought at a very high cost to the game itself. The past season has had its share of objections, allegations and counter allegations. Honesty among club officials appears to have taken a dip. Suspicion and mistrust is seeping in and those who strive for fairness are being scalded.

Fielding over-age players seems to be the main trouble. It happened too frequently in the past without any action taken. Of course no action can be taken unless there is an objection which must be proved. But objections, equitable though they may be, tend to leave a stain. And they are very difficult to prove. Honour is at stake. Officials who field illegal teams should try to realise how this effects young players. Those who are asked to play illegally should try not to succumb to the temptation. It is not fair to themselves to their team mates or to their opponents. And they will be the better for it.

In the under 16 championship, it was a Westport-Ballinrobe final, played at Crossmolina before the Mayo-Cavan National Football League game at the beginning of November. Westport were taller and stronger and used the big pitch to good advantage and by half time had dazzled their way to a 5-4 to 0-3 lead. Players like Jack King, Cathal Dunning, Paddy Smith, Aidan Walsh, Michael Ring, Paddy Tiernan, S. Sheridan and B. Keating combined beautifully and deserved that lead. Michael Flannery, Geoff Diskin, Michael Noone, Michael Keane, John Fox, Gerard Heneghan, Tom Fox and Pat Fleming gave nothing away for

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Ballinrobe, but could not break down the Westport defence and were beaten by 8-10 to 3-5.

Kilmeena won the under 14 championship beating Garrymore by 2-15 to 0-5. They had an easy victory over Ballina in the semi-final at Foxford. Garrymore were beaten by East winners, Charlestown, but they objected to Charlestown and won, and were thus awarded the match.

Thrilling final

Anyone who watched the Mayo minor football final between Claremorris and Kiltimagh could not have been but thrilled at the high standard of football. The pity of it was that so few were there to see it; worse still, so few knew about it. Superiority dangled precariously with both sides in a vibrant see-saw battle, before victory rested finally with Claremorris, by a single point. That point was scored from a free by John Keane 30 seconds from the end. What this match proved beyond doubt was that the standard of football among minors is as high now if not higher than it has ever been. You had just to watch the displays of Ger Conroy, Bernie Jennings, Martin O'Brien and Michael Higgins for Claremorris, and Ciaran Fallon, Ciaran Sloyan, Ray McNicholas and Colm Rooney for Kiltimagh, to be assured of many potential Mayo stars.

Claremorris won the South championship with an easy win over Garrymore in the final. Garrymore objected, on the grounds that Claremorris had two illegal players. They lost the objection, but appealed to the Minor Board who suspended one Claremorris player. The game was not awarded to Garrymore though, and the suspended player successfully appealed his suspension to the Appeals Board. Kiltimagh beat Ballyhaunis in the East final rather easily, but were hard pressed to beat a combination of Balla/ Ballintubber in the semi-final. Claremorris got to the final by beating an amalgamation of clubs from Killala and Belmullet.

Kiltimagh's brave decision

Kiltimagh's deicsion to go it alone in the under 21 championship was courageous. And the fact that this decision was thrust upon them at the last moment speaks volumes for the wealth of talent this club possesses.

Knockmore/Bonniconlon won out in the North, beating

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Ronud Towers, an amalgamation of Cooneal, Moygownagh, Lacken and Killala clubs. In the West an amalgamation of Kilmeena, Islandeady and Westport clubs beat Burrishoole/Achill in the final. Knockmore thus met Kilmeena in the county semi-final at Crossmolina. It was played in a downpour, but this did not dampen the enthusiasm of the 26 players. For they turned in fine displays with the North side winning narrowly.

Garrymore beat Claremorris by 3-3 to 1-8 in the South final at Ballinrobe. And so Garrymore qualified to meet Kiltimagh in the other semi-final at Castlebar. After a tough battle Kiltimagh won by 1-8 to 0-9.

Thus, the stage was set for the final. And what a final! For every minute of that game at Castlebar the play swung like a pendulum, so much so that victory could find no side to rest. It was, as it deserved to be—a perfect result for two sides who thrilled everyone who watched. They met again, a week later, at Castlebar, both confident of victory, both wiser. Four times during the first half they were level again. And although Kiltimagh led by two points at the interval, the teams still looked so evenly balanced that no winner stuck out. But ten minutes after the re-start John Roughneen scored a goal for Kiltimagh. It was the turning point. Slowly Knockmore's confidence cracked and Kiltimagh began to build up a lead that reached eight points. It was cut back to six points by the Knockmore men, but no more. And it was not for want of trying. How they tried! But the Kiltimagh barriers time and again smacked back the losers' bravest efforts. They simply refused to be pierced. And the magnificence of Jimmy Gallagher, Ray McNicholas and Michael Charlton is what held that defence together. And then up front they had a fast and slick unit who used the ball well and who, because of their size and speed, were more adaptable to McHale Park. All of them, John Roughneen, Ciaran Sloyan, Ciaran Fallon, Ciaran Heneghan and Pat Donohue were excellent. Knockmore were once again out of luck. But it is this very kind of luck that will temper them for other games. Victory will then be all the sweeter.

In Pat Warde, Pierce Walsh, Jimmy Warde, the O'Hora brothers, Michael and Paddy, Knockmore have talent second to none. They will be heard of again.

Kiltimagh had more to celebrate than mere victory that evening in the dressing rooms. They also celebrated their faith in themselves, the faith that helped them decide that day in Charlestown to go it alone.

COILLTE COME HOME WEEK 1971

KILTIMAGH

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All-Irelands, National Leagues, if only . . .

by Mick Dunne

BY definition surprise results in football are unexpected . . . otherwise they would not be surprises. Yet, when they do turn up in the championship or league they hardly shock those of us who are sports reporters regularly covering Gaelic games.

This is not to say we can anticipate them, for if we did we would never forecast wrong. (Or as my unkind friends say: "You mean you'd sometimes get one right"). No, it is simply that after so many years in journalism we are immune to shocks—the really stunning shocks that leave you flabbergasted. Still you could have knocked me over with a feather on June 21 last when I heard that startling result from Tuam: Roscommon 2-10, Mayo 1-9. I was not in the West that day. With all due respects to Donal Keenan, Phil Gannon and my other friends in Roscommon I readily admit that my first reaction was disbelief. My second was that RTE had got the score wrong.

But there was no correction as I listened to "Sportstime" that evening in Belfast, so Mayo were out of the 1970 championship first go. Now Mayo have gone out of many a championship in the 20 years I have been writing about Gaelic games. Remember that upset in Tuam in 1954? By then I had not become quite so immune to shocks. To me, however, 1970 was different from every other year that saw Mayo's championship hopes crushed early in the summer; it was much, much different to any of their failures in the last five or six years. You see, in 1970—above any other year—I believed that Mayo had, at last, re-established themselves as a football force of some permanence. The provincial success of 1967 was sweet—all the more so because of the long, long wait that preceded it—but then it turned sour in the All-Ireland semi-final against Meath. But for me the triumph in the National League, Mayo's very own happy hunting ground in former decades, when they surged back in the third quarter to beat Down last May seemed evidence of football bravery and determination to suggest that they were back to stay. I know how one swallow does not make a summer, so that sparkling display

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in Wembley Stadium two weeks later came as confirmation of what was now my conviction. Telephoning my reports from the Wembley press loft I began: "That triumph in the National Football League final has done Mayo a world of good. They now have a degree of self-assurance which they never possessed when knocking at the door of success in recent years . . ."

One feature of Mayo football has impressed me forcibly over the years. When they play well they play beautiful football—and they certainly did it that day in London. "It was altogether a new Mayo we saw in the closing minutes of an exceedingly exciting second half," says I. But it did not last long. Unfortunately for Mayo, the boys in the green and red were back to the old Mayo a few weeks later in Tuam. So here am I, for the umpteenth time, asking what IS wrong with Mayo?

It is not that they lack footballing talent. The county has produced some of the finest minors and under 21s we saw in the 1960s and the seniors have shown again and again—but, tragically. with no consistency—that they are as accomplished as any players now in the game. What county, no matter how successful, would not gladly have snapped up Willie Casey, John Morley, John Carey, Joe Corcoran, Joe Langan and many others of the past decade if an accident of birth had placed them elsewhere. Perhaps, the explanation lies in the quip a friend of mine once made. "You know," said he, "the best thing that could have happened Mayo would have been for the Galway footballers to get out of Connacht like their hurlers in 1959." Of course, he was joking, but you know the word said in jest . . . !

It is certainly no joke that it was Mayo's misfortune to have to languish in shade of Galway's continued success throughout most of the past six years. This was at a time when Mayo's best minors and under 21 were coming to the maturity of manhood and trying to settle down as seniors. But how can you be anything other than unsettled, and be increasingly frustrated, when your lot is to suffer disappointment after disappointment—and usually from the same source?

It is not at all an unsound declaration to say that at any other time Mayo's careful maturing of the talent they knew they had in the county, the coaching and the training, would have paid off handsomely but for the fact that the Galway three-in-a-row men hit football pre-eminence just a year or two too soon for Mayo. By the time Mayo's team building was complete about '65 or '66, Galway were already kings of, not only Connacht, but

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the whole football scene. I knew at least one of the Mayo officials who holds with this theory. And the records bear him out. In 1965 Mayo lost a divisional final of the league to Galway (2-6 to 0-7), in '66 they were beaten in the Connacht final by Galway (0-12 to 1-8), there was a defeat in '67 (2-6 to 2-4) in the divisional final, and there were two the following year (2-11 to 2-5 in the divisional final and 2-10 to 2-9 in the provincial final when they were defendnig champions).

So, apart from that memorable 3-13 to 1-8 victory in the '67 semi-final, Mayo were the second best team in Connacht over a period of four years. And to leave their fate all the more disheartening those defeats were, as often as not, in their own Castlebar. What might have happened had they managed to get out of Connacht in the earlier years of their formation as a senior team is anybody's guess.

It is my firm belief that successive, baffling defeats by Galway deprived Mayo, in a period when they most needed it, of the chance to gain football self-assurance and self-respect. Thwarted at almost every attempt by the same maroon-jerseyed neighbours, the Mayo players became inhibited to a degree that, even in maturity, they never gained complete confidence. What they needed was a Sean Flanagan or a Padraic Carney. men whose very presence in a team, who example and urging, maybe even haranguing, as well as their own football accomplishments could draw that little bit more out of team-mates when these colleagues felt they were done. Look at what Flanagan, corner back supreme and almost dictatorial as captain in demanding more from his team, did for Mayo two decades ago; remember how Carney could rev-up Mayo to zoom forward just once more when that extra dash was needed.

This is no disparagement of the present wearers of the green and red; it is merely the statment of a belief in what they could have done had they someone to bring out the best in them, for I remain certain that the best of football is there. All they need is someone who can extract it every day and not just now and then. Perhaps, what they need is someone who can do for them up front what the stout-hearted John Morley does for them in defence.

My wish for Mayo's success is because the work of people like Johnny Mulvey, Seamus Daly, Willie Casey, Father Leo Morahan and Mick Loftus deserves reward. And I want to see it happen before footballers like Morley, Carey, Langan, Corcoran and Prendergast doff the green and red for the last time.

Knockmore - Mayo Intermediate finalists



Intermediate section a classic

by 'Harold'

TO say that the Mayo Intermediate Football Championship was a successful one is a mild statement of fact. It was far more. It was without doubt the outstanding competition in the county this year. My only disappointment must be blamed on the demands of a pressing deadline. For at the time of writing the final—and what a game that should be—between Aughamore and Knockmore is outstanding, making it impossible for me to give the review the comprehensive treatment which it deserves. That is not to say that there was not sufficient 'meat' in the earlier stages to make my task a relatively simple one. The opposite would be more correct.

The indications were, right from the days of April when the competition got under way, that it would prove to be a classic in every respect. This was easy to see glancing at the participants: Ballaghaderreen, Knockmore, Belmullet, Kiltimagh, Crossmolina and Aughamore (all in one section), with The Neale, Kilmaine, Balla, Kilmeena, Claremorris and Ballintubber in the other. There was a certain element of cautiousness and perhaps indecision attached to the performances of many top teams in those preliminary rounds. But as the event progressed on the strength of some exceptionally fine performances all round, the big names emerged leading the chase for ultimate honours.

Ballaghaderreen were doing well. So too were Aughamore and Belmullet. Knockmore were well in the hunt as were Ballintubber and Kilmaine. The going was tightest in the North/East division ,where Knockmore, Aughamore and Ballaghaderreen were the front runners. Belmullet were not too far behind.

The visit of Ballaghaderreen to the Erris capital for their clash with the Belmullet men was certainly a talking point. Really, it was a championship game which never was. Yet its outcome had a vital bearing on the final shake-up. Played in September, it resulted in a success for the Erris men. But apparently before the commencement they had conceeded the points to the visitors. Referee Terry Casey, Ballina, reported later that Belmullet were

Aughamore — Mayo Intermediate finalists



an hour late in fielding a team and did not present him with a list of players. His decision to give the points to Ballaghaderreen had the consent of Belmullet officials, it was stated, and the sides then played a challenge match.

But the fact that Ballaghaderren collected two points for their 70-mile journey created a situation where there had to be a three-way play-off for semi-final positions . . . and brought a welter of protests from the others involved. However, following some delay the stage was set for the clash of Ballaghaderreen and their neighbours, Aughamore, at Charlestown, to help clear the issue.

Aughamore, recent arrivals from junior ranks, were in bother early on when they trailed by six points. Ballaghaderreen's Sean Kilbride and Con Moynihan held the O'Grady brothers, who supplied the midfield power of the Aughamore men, in check. On the resumption, the Aughamore line-up showed some alterations. The switches paid dividends, and at the same time the O'Grady's, Sean and Danny, came more into the picture at midfield. Pat Glavey who guided home a great goal 11 minutes after the restart, helped Aughamore forget the horrors of a 2-3 to 0-3 interval deficit. Driven on by this score they battled on but three minutes from the end they were still a single point in arrears. Then Sean O'Grady chipped a free from 45 yards into the Ballaghaderreen goal area. Tony Bolton rose to meet it in the square and he flicked it into the net. That score did it. Aughamore were through to the semi-finals.

Aughamore can thank the resolute displays of Tim Snee, Kieran Durcan, Sean and Danny O'Grady, Pat Glavey, Mickey Burke, Johnny Robinson and Tony Bolton for their success. At the same time one must sympathise with Ballaghaderreen's Frank Hunt, Johnny McKenzie, Dan O'Mahoney, Sean Kilbride, John Morley, Mal. Dooney and Frank Hunt, who contributed so much to the performance of the losing side.

Aughamore's next outing brought them to Ballinrobe to take on Ballintubber, whose litany of disaster and ill-luck in intermediate grade is almost unbelievable. That is why I had so much feeling for them when they again crashed at a crucial stage. Aughamore had the better of the battle, winning by 2-7 to 1-7, in a memorable game. In saying this I do not attempt to minimise the sparkling display of the East Mayo representatives. They fully deserved their win. Yet one has, at the same time, to admire the bravery and stamina of the Ballintubber squad who had to fight so hard for so long just to keep in touch.

Aughamore looked good at the commencement. They were a point ahead at the interval (0-4 to 0-3) and were it not for some sterling work by Tommy Lally and Sean Feeney (goal) in the Ballintubber defence, they could well have been much further in front. Ballintubber sustained two grave body blows in the mid-second half period when Aughamore crashed in two goals. Tony Bolton engineered the first, giving the ball to Johnny Robinson to push it through. The second came from Michael Kenny who was unamrked when he grabbed possession, inside the Ballintubber rear sector. A further point from Robinson pushed the winners into a more comfortable position, before Ballintubber gathered their forces. They defied the might of the Easterners and fought back. Robert Coyne shot home a good goal and then Marcus Keane fired over a final point. But it was all to no avail. Aughamore held on and qualified for the final.

For Ballintubber it was yet another chapter in their unrewarding history in intermediate ranks. Still the Feeneys, Tommy Lally, Jack Heneghan, Michael Prendergast, Marcus Keane, Robert Coyne adn Vincent Keane can take pride in a job well done.

At the same time, in the other sector, Knockmore and Kilmaine were concerned with the second semi-final. Here the victors were the North Mayo side and it was really an untesting experience. They had 2-10 to 1-4 to spare at the end of the 60 minutes, and they displayed themselves to be a well-drilled and capable side. The only time they were pressed was in the opening half when Kilmaine, aided by the strong wind, went six points clear. Then Peter Hughes brough tKnockmore into the picture with a fine goal and when Christy Hughes had another, on the resumption, the challenge offered by Kilmaine —just down from senior ranks—fizzled away.

Knockmore are an experienced side and they too have been seeking success of late. They can thank Peter and Christy Hughes, the Wardes, Pat and John, Tommy and Mick O'Hora, Pierce Walsh, Joe Clarke, Brendan Breslin, Sean Munnelly, P. J. King, J. J. Hegarty and Liam McHale, for having brought them to the county final stage.

What a pity I cannot go on from there. However, one thing is quite clear: the intermediate championship is more than proving its value. The quality of football and the interest shown is overshadowing many of the more established competitions. It has provided an excellent level between junior ranks and the senior grade, which seems to have undergone a depression of late.

Rogha na mBan

le Úna Ní Ghabhláin

IS fada mé anois ag freastal ar chluichí peile. Tá na rialacha a bhaineann leis an imirt léite agam agus tá mé in ann "put him off, ref!" a bhéicíl chomh maith leis an chéad duine eile. Ach, an bhfuil comhcheilg éigin ar siúl chun an leabhar rialacha eile, an ceann a bhaineann leis an lucht-leanúna, a choinneál uaim? Tá mé cinnte go bhfuil a leithéid ann mar is cosúil go bhfuil na rialacha breise seo á leanúint go daingean ag na fir go léir. Ó bheith ag breathnú ar nósanna na bhfear ar pháirceanna éagsúla le tamall anuas, tá mé tar éis roinnt de na rialacha rúnda seo a dhéanamh amach mar seo leanas:

(1) Ní ceadaítear cóta mór a chaitheamh. Is cuma cé chomh fuar is a bhíonn an lá, caithfear do chóta a iompar ar d'uilinn agus é a tharraingt i do dhiaidh ar fud na páirce.

(2) Ag leath-ama tá dualgas ort rith amach go lár na páirce agus ciorcal a dhéanamh leis an chuid eile den lucht féachana thart timpeall ar na foirne. Fiú amháin má imíonn na foirne den pháirc, caithfidh tú seasamh gan gciorcal. Rinne mé an-chuid staidéar ar an riail seo agus tá mé tar éis teacht ar an tuairim go bhfuil baint aige leis na sean-searmanaisí a bhíodh ag na draoithe fadó. Ar ndóigh, bíonn brí fé leith san gciorcal i gcúrsaí draíochta. Ní foláir, mar sin, nó bíonn na fir i lár na páirce ag iarraidh draíochta a chur ar dhuine nó ar rud éigin—mar seo leanas b'fhéidir:

Moladh ins na h-árda is ar fud na cruinne
Do Shéimí Daly 's don Athair Leo!
Mí-ádh 's mallacht ar an dream in ár gcoinne,
Go raibh siad gan scór 's an bua ag Muigheo!" (3 h-uaire).

(3) Má thárlaíonn sé go mbriseann babhta dornálaíochta amach idir beirt iomaitheóir, is cuma cé chomh compórdach is a bhíonn do shuíochán, caithfidh tú an taobh-líne a fhágáil láith-reach agus dul, i líne díreach, is cuma cé nó céard a thagann san bhealach ort, agus d'áit a thógáil san 'gciorcal draíochta' thart timpeall ar an bheirt dornálaí.

(4) Ag na cluichí beaga nuair nach mbíonn clár scóir le

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feiceáil, ní ceadaítear ariamh an scór a chomhaireamh. Má chuir-ean nduine ceist ort faoi, abair leis: "Á tá cúilín nó dhó eatartha"—mar dheadh gur cuma cén scór atá ann.

Ar ndóigh, tá rialacha fé leith san leabhrán rúnda a bhain-eann go díreach leis na cailíní:

(1) Má fheiceann tú cailín ag freastal níos mó ná uair amháin ar chluiche peile, bí cinnte go bhfuil sí ag iarraidh a caipín a chaitheamh le duine de na peileadóirí agus, má fhághann tú seans uirthí, abair é seo leí.

(2) Má bhíonn tú taobh thiar de chailín ag cluiche peile, beidh sé de dhualgas ort fearg a chur uirthí ar bhealach éigin, mar shompla ag rá rudaí amaideacha mar "Nach bhfuil an cúl-báire íontach dathúil? FYach na géaga áilne gruagacha atá faoi!"

(3) Ní ceadaitear éisteacht le tuairimí chailín maidir le cúrsaí peile.

Anuraidh, san chontae seo, d'eirigh stáid an-chontúirteach maidir leis na rialacha faoi chailíní. Tosnaíodh ar mná a chlárú mar bhaill de chlubanna! Creidim, ó thuairiscí neamh-oifigiúla, go raibh rí-rá san chumann faoi'n gcéim ar gcúl seo (maith dom an pun), ar eagla go mbéadh na mná ag ceapadh anois go mbéadh sé de chead acu freastal ar chruinnithe agus bheith ag caint. "I gceann tamaillín eile' dúirt ball amháin "beidh siad ag iarraidh foirne an chontae a phiocadh agus ag lorg áiteacha san tochaltán (dug out) i bPáirc an Chrócaigh taobh le Paddy Basquil agus Johnny Mulvey!" Sa deireadh, tháinig fuascailt na faidhbe ó bhall chríonn a dúirt: "Tabharfaidh muid cead dóibh tae a dhéan-amh anois 's arís ag cruinnithe. Sa t-slí seo, fanfaidh siad san chistin agus, mar is eol daoibh, sin an áit ar cheart dóibh a bheith."

Go gairid ina dhiaidh sin bunaíodh craobh de "Saoirse na mBan" (Women's Lib.) chun breathnú isteach san scéal. Níorbh 'fhada, áfach, gur thosnuigh na fir ag clárú san chraobh agus, ar ndóigh, chuir seo íontas ar na mná go dtí go bhfuair siad amach gur cheap na fir gurb 'é a bhí mar aidhm ag Saoirse na mBan ná ionsaí a dhéanamh ar Riail 27! Ní nach íonadh, thuit an chraobh as a céile tar éis tamaill.

Anois, a Fheara Fáil, nuair atk gach cosúlacht ar an scéal go bhfuil an tír seo ag imirt in aghaidh na gaoithe i ndara-leath an chéid seo, glacaigí mo chomhairle! Caith uaibh bhur leabhair rúnda agus tabhair seans do na mná seasamh libh ag cruinnithe, ar na taobh-línte agus ins na 'ciorcail draóochta'! Tá 'bearna baoil' an Chumainn Lúithchleasa Gael sáthach leathan dúinn uilig na laetheannta seo. Ní neart go cur le chéile!

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Connacht club kings

by Clubman

IT was a Saturday evening, July 18, and a Mayo team was out on the pitch at Tuam Stadium about to corner for themselves a special glory niche in Mayo's football book of history. They were about to become the first Mayo team to win the Connacht inter-club championship.

Not surprisingly, and perhaps fittingly, the club that was destined to carve out this piece of fame was the illustrious Castlebar Mitchels. They were about to establish themselves as the best club team in Connacht. No mean achievement. History was about to be made and it was rather a pity that so few people turned out to see the events that went to the making of this piece of football history, just as it is a shame that very little recognition was given to the achievement by the people of the county.

For the Mitchels, the campaign to capture the Connacht prize commenced in September of 1969 when they overwhelmed Ballina Stephenites to take the Mayo senior title. Their work was only starting. They had just won the right to represent the county in the Connacht club series. Through the winter the Mitchels outfit kept in condition with fairly regular training sessions. The spring of this year saw the team fitter than it had ever been at this time. Then came the first game against Leitrim champions, Ballinamore.

It was a week's evening game at McHale Park and there were few people gathered to offer encouragement. The Mitchels treated their opposition with the respect that is always held for a team of unknown quality. Ballinamore were a team of unknowns, with a few exceptions, and this made the pre-match atmosphere even more tense and the outcome more unpredictable. In five minutes Ballinamore were three points to the good and Castlebar had yet to score. But then George Geraghty opened Castlebar's account with a great goal and from there on there was only one team in it. Castlebar won by four points (1-11 to 2-4) without breaking out of a canter.

And so to the final. But their task was not going to be an easy one, for their opposition was to be none other than Dunmore

Castlebar Mitchels - Connacht club champions 1969



McHales—a club that is to Galway football as the Mitchels is to Mayo. It was a clash of the giants. Dunmore could call upon the services of such players as John and 'Pateen' Donnellan, John and Tommy Keenan, Gay Mitchel, Andy O'Connor, Sean Gannon, Seamus Leydon, Ray Charles and Peter Silk, all of whom had inter-county experience. It was the makings of a formidible fifteen and they were in good form.

Going into the final minutes of the first half Dunmore were four points up on their rivals (0-6 to 0-2) as Castlebar, despite a fair share of the play, found difficulty in getting their range. Then up popped Micksie Clarke to bang home a splendid goal that put Castlebar in the running. On the restart the Mitchels failed to take firm control and it was not until the final fifteen minutes that they took the lead for the first time. Then some great long-range points from Ray Prendergast, Joe Langan, Frank Reynolds, and a Brian McDonald goal set the seal on a thrilling and exciting win. The score: Castlebar Mitchels 2-10; Dunmore 0-10.

The Mitchels defence remained steadfast under the severe pressure it had been subjected to and none played more significant parts than Brendan O'Shea, John Dunne and Tommy Grier. Liam O'Neill turned in a great hour at mid-field and the attack, with Prendergast, Clarke, McDonald and Geraghty in fine form, left the Dunmore rearguard floundering when they finally turned on the pressure in the final fifteen minutes.

As befitted an occasion when history was being made both sides produced football of a rare calibre and the game that saw the Mitchels take the Connacht title will be remembered as one of the finest games of football during 1970.

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LAST year proved to be the most successful one yet for the G.A.A. in vocational schools in Mayo when a record number of games were played. As in the previous year under 15 and under 17 competitions were staged. The under 17 competition was divided into two independent sections—division 1 and 2. Division 1 was divided. Eight teams took part: (1a) Ballinrobe, Claremorris, Westport and Castlebar were the contestants and Achill (the holders), Belmullet, Ballina and Kiltimagh compiled 1b. Both sections were completed on a home and away league basis, thus guaranteeing each team six matches. The winners of 1a, Castlebar, were drawn to play the holders Achill, odds on favourites, in the first semi-final at Newport. Castlebar caused a major upset by crashing home two late goals and eventually ran out convincing winners.

In the second semi-final Ballinrobe were forced to a replay by Ballina before qualifying for their second successive final. In the final, played under atrocious weather conditions at Claremorris, Castlebar captured their first senior title and their second major trophy in two years by a four-points margin.

In division 2 Ballyhaunis, Swinford, Charlestown, Lacken Cross, Crossmolina and Geesala fielded teams. Again this was subdivided and the games played on a home and away basis. After overcoming all opposition, Swinford and Lacken Cross contested the final where Swinford, giving a fine exhibition of skilful football, proved too strong for the holders, Lacken Cross.

In the under 15 grade all the schools fielded teams. The schools were divided into four geographical regions. Ballinrobe, Castlebar, Belmullet and Ballina reached the semi-finals. Ballinrobe knocked out the Connacht champions, Castlebar, after extra time and Belmullet accouned for Ballina. Ballinrobe became Mayo's representatives in the Connacht championship by defeating Belmullet. After easily overcoming Galway city they failed narrowly to a physically stronger Ballinasloe side. Mayo decided not to field a county team last year due to difficulty in holding trials.

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1910—Ballina Stephenites
1911—Ballina Stephenites
1912—Ballina Stephenites
1913—Ballina Stephenites
1914—Ballina Stephenites
1915—Ballina Stephenites
1916—Ballina Stephenites
1917—Lacken
1918—Ballina Stephenites
1919—Ballyhaunis
1920—Ballina Stephenites
1921—Abandoned
1922—Abandoned
1923—Abandoned
1924—Ballina Stephenites
1925—Ballina Stephenites
1926—Ballina Stephenites
1927—Ballina Stephenites
1928—Ballina Stephenites
1929—Ballina Stephenites
1930—Castlebar Mitchels
1931—Castlebar Mitchels
1932—Castlebar Mitchels
1933—Ballina Stephenites
1934—Castlebar Mitchels
1935—Ballina Stephenites
1936—Ballycastle
1937—Ballycastle
1938—Ballina Stephenites
1939—Ballycastle
1940—Ballina declared winners
1941—Castlebar Mitchels
1942—Castlebar Mitchels
1943—Ballina Stephenites
1944—Castlebar Mitchels
1945—Castlebar Mitchels
1946—Castlebar Mitchels
1947—Ballina Stephenites
1948—Castlebar Mitchels
1949—Crossmolina
1950—Castlebar Mitchels
1951—Castlebar Mitchels
1952—Castlebar Mitchels
1953—Castlebar Mitchels
1954—Castlebar Mitchels
1955—Ballina Stephenites
1956—Castlebar Mitchels
1957—East Mayo
1958—Ballyhaunis
1959—Castlebar Mitchels
1960—West Mayo
1961—Claremorris
1962—Castlebar Mitchels
1963—Castlebar Mitchels
1964—Claremorris
1965—Claremorris
1966—Ballina Stephenites
1967—East Mayo
1968—North Mayo
1969—Castlebar Mitchels
1970—Castlebar Mitchels

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The men of tomorrow

by Fr. Newell

AS 1970 draws to a close Mayo people will look back with mixed feelings on the fortunes of their footballers during the past year. Elation over a fine league victory, and success at last, turned to disappointment and recrimination at wind-swept Tuam. But if the past can provide inspiration for the present, the present can inspire hope for the future.

If there is strength in numbers we can take courage from the scene in Mayo. Close on 500 boys have taken part in the competitions in Mayo during the year. This should be proof of our loyalty and dedication to the games. Far from losing ground, new ground has been broken. Louisburgh, the home of many fine players in the past, took part in the competitions for the first time, as also did Charlestown.

The young lads from Westport brought back a Connacht title in juvenile, after having won Corn na Cásca in Mayo. In the Mayo final St. Colman's (Claremorris) were their victims. My memory spares me the shame of giving the score. Tuam C.B.S. provided the opposition in the Connacht final. The thoroughness and skill with which those Westport lads went about their task augurs well for the future of the game over by Clew Bay. St. Gerald's (Castlebar) brought home the Flanagan Cup in Mayo and failed only narrowly in the Connacht final of Grade B senior. Old followers of the game will be glad to hear that there are other Kennys and Munnellys on the way. St. Colman's (Claremorris) are junior champions in the B grade. After winning the Colleran Cup in Mayo, Tuam C.B.S. were to be the opposition in the Connacht final. After going down by one point in a replay with the same opposition a year ago, the score was reversed this year in what must have been one of the best games of the year. St. Nathy's are junior champions in grade A.

But the senior players of St. Colman's provided the headlines for 1970. It is true that they had a tradition of their own built up over the years by Fr. Jarlath Waldron. They had many Connacht titles under their belt in the B. Grade. But now they had

St. Colman's College — Connacht colleges champions



to face opposition that strikes terror into most colleges in Ireland. Many thought that they were stepping out of their class. The newspapers mentioned David and Goliath. There was plenty of enthusiasm and spirit to face it. Trainers that used to have to push were now finding it difficult to catch up.

They were drawn to play Summerhill College (Sligo) in their first game. On a day that was meant only for the brave they took the field more in hope than in confidence. The surprise element, perhaps, resulted in an easy victory for St. Colman's but they had gained in confidence. In their second game they met a very young St. Nathy's team and collected two more points to insure a place in the Connacht semi-finals. Failure to St. Muredach's meant another tilt at Summerhill to decide who would play St. Jarlath's in the first of the semi-finals. They went under by one point and so gained the doubtful privilege of facing Ireland's best-known football home. Against their great friends, and now their rivals for the first time, St. Colman's had only courage to offer against a great tradition. They had given St. Jarlath's a close run in a challenge match earlier in the year, but they knew that those lads hunted only for big game. But somehow we did win. Some said that St. Jarlath's were not as good as they used to be and some said something about St. Colman's proximity to Knock.

And so on to the Connacht final. Sligo had come through against Athenry. Prematch forecasts could be no more than guesses as each side had a victory to its credit. After only a few minutes of the game, St. Colman's lost their great captain, Noel Higgins, but they became Connacht champions. For them it was a first.

St. Malachy's (Belfast) were Ulster champions for the first time since 1927, and St. Colman's felt fairly confident going to Breffni Park for the semi-final. All Ulster seemed to have descended upon them. At half time well-wishers had all sorts of suggestions for repairs to the team. But the only advice that could help was how to keep out the tide with a pitch fork. And so St. Colman's went under to the tune of 4-9 to 2-6. They had not prepared to deal with the unusual method of play of the Belfast boys, and their captain, the legs of the team, was in hospital. They might have done better.

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Grounds Development

by Johnny Biesty

IT is eighty-six years since our Association was founded and eighty-six years is a long time in the history of any organisation. During that time Mayo has played a leading part in the affairs of the Association. We have excelled on the playing fields and many records have been set up by our county teams. We have, also, produced many fine legislatures, and there was a Mayo man present at the founding of the G.A.A. in Thurles in 1884.

While our record makes other counties envious there is one area in which we have fallen very far behind. That is in the provision of playing fields and proper dressing facilities for our teams and players.

The County Ground's Committee, recent formed, found in a survey it carried out that out of forty senior, intermediate and junior clubs in the county only thirten had vested pitches, eight were developed for playing, three had dressing rooms, and only two had showers included. This seemed very disheartening. But the survey further revealed that over the next two or three years the G.A.A. clubs in Mayo had planned to spend over £50,000 in providing properly equipped playing fields with dressing rooms and showers. So by the end of 1972 Mayo should have an adequate number of fully equipped grounds.

The purpose of the Grounds Committee is to inform clubs of the grants and incentives that are available; to allocate the funds, at its disposal, to the various development schemes.

Club Rooms and Community Centres. To encourage development of this kind a grant of 20 per cent of expenditure up to a maximum of £1,000 may be approved. It may be pointed out, however, that such a claim will be taken into account in relation to the overall needs of the county.

In addition to the above clubs who have invested in the Association's Credit Scheme can borrow money at exceptionally low rates of interest with adequate time for repayment.

Clubs must be reminded that while the above grants are very generous a sizable amount of money will have to be raised locally and every club should work within its own capabilities.

Championship winners

JUNIOR

1930—Claremorris
1931—Ballina
1932—Kiltimagh
1933—Charlestown
1934—Ballinrobe
1935—Killasser
1936—Kiltimagh
1937—Westport
1938—Charlestown
1939—Kiltimagh
1940—Balla
1941—Ballaghaderreen
1942—Achill
1943—Belmullet
1944—Belmullet
1945—Newport
1946—Mayo Abbey
1947—Crossmolina
1948—Killala
1949—Mulranny
1950—Louisburgh
1951—Charlestown
1952—Ardnaree
1953—Charlestown
1954—Swinford
1955—Crossmolina
1956—St. Coman's
1957—Ballyhaunis
1958—Ballinrobe
1959—Ardnaree
1960—Claremorris
1961—Garrymore
1962—Crossmolina
1963—Charlestown
1964—St. Coman's
1965—Achill
1966—Breaffy
1967—Kiltimagh
1968—Ballaghaderreen
1969—Aughamore
1970—Westport

MINOR

1930—Castlebar
1931—Claremorris
1932—Claremorris
1933—Castlebar
1934—Castlebar
1935—Ballina
1936—Ballina
1937—Killasser
1938—Ballina
1939—Castlebar
1940—Abandoned
1941—Castlebar
1942—Abandoned
1943—Abandoned
1944—Abandoned
1945—Ballina
1946—Foxford
1947—Castlebar
1948—Ballina
1949—Ballaghaderreen
1950—Ballina
1951—Swinford
1952—Ballyhaunis
1953—Charlestown
1954—Castlebar
1955—Castlebar
1956—Belmullet
1957—Carras
1958—Ballina
1959—Carras
1960—Ballina
1961—Ballinrobe
1962—Belmullet
1963—Claremorris
1964—Claremorris
1965—Achill
1966—Aughamore
1967—Ballina
1968—Ballaghaderreen
1969—Claremorris
1970—Claremorris

Ulster held the aces at Croke Park

by T.P.

IT seemed—on that windy day in Crossmolina—that Connacht could very well pull it off in the Railway Cup competition. Leinster, it has to be admitted, were a rather ragged bunch, unable to make any real impression on the game. They managed, in the early part of the tussle, to go ahead by three points, but it was obvious that unless there was something more to follow, the score would just not be sufficient to retain Connacht later.

In fact later was just before the interval, when Connacht burst through for a goal and that sealed up the game from their point of view. Dermot Earley, the Roscommon star had a vital hand in instigating the movement. He sent the ball in the direction of Mayo's Willie McGee. He in turn flashed on to Seamus Leydon (Galway) who quickly found Roscommon's John Kelly. The Roscommon player's volley crashed past the Leinster defence, and this score had the effect of leaving the sides level, 0-4 to 1-1 at the interval.

On the resumption, Connacht took complete control and were not at all hard pressed to continue on their scoring way. The points quickly mounted, and each one hammered a nail in Leinster's coffin. The visitors' performance would have appeared all the more insipid, scorewise, were it not for a face-saving goal minutes from the end by Mickie McKeown.

The win was a fine one. But it was all too easy and did not serve in any way to evaluate the potential of Connacht . . . as we quickly found out when they were crushed in the St. Patrick's Day spectacle at Croke Park, with Ulster triumphant. Nevertheless, Mayomen Eugene Rooney, Johnny Carey, Ray Prendergast, John Morley and Willie McGee need have no feelings of guilt. They all played their respective roles without blemish.

DID YOU KNOW? — That in 1952 eight Mayo men played on the Ireland team which defeated the Combined Universities by 2-4 to 1-5. Sean Wynne, Paddy Prendergast, Sean Flanagan, Eamonn Mongey, Padraic Carney, the late Mick Flanagan and Tom Langan were selected, while Henry Dixon (sub) replaced Ray Beirne.



Great goal . . . that wasn't. *Mayo v. Cork Junior Semi-Final.*

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Significance of training

SEAMUS DALY was a Mayo minor in 1935 (when he won an All-Ireland) 1936 and 1937. He played junior and senior football with Mayo up to 1948. He was a member of the Mayo team that drew with Galway in the memorable 1948 Connacht final and would likely have been in the line-up for the re-play (which Mayo won after extra time) but for an ankle injury received in training.

For the past four years he has been involved with training the Mayo team either on his own or with Willie Casey and has been a West Mayo selector for that period. In this interview with Christy Loftus he gives some of his thoughts on training and football in general.

Naturally, to Daly training is very significant. He says that training is of prime importance to the footballer today. "It is away tougher than in my day and there is a great difference in the way players of today train at club level and on their own to maintain fitness all year round.

"The standard of football has improved too and there is a greater demand on footballers to keep in condition. One thing that strikes me is the levelling out of standards as between different counties. There was a time when you could name two teams at the beginning of any year and be reasonably sure that one or both was going to contest the All-Ireland final. Nowadays you can name ten or twelve teams at the start of the season and you still might not have the one that will eventually win. Training has played a major part in this levelling out," he said.

He is not in agreement with the 40 minute half as it places too great a demand on players. "The 80 minute game was introduced because there were too many stoppages and it was felt the spectator was not getting a fair deal. But instead of trying to eliminate the stoppages extra time was introduced. In an effort to reduce stoppages I would like to see some rules brought in on a trial basis and one thing I would recommend would be the thirteen-a-side. I would also like to see the palmed pass re-introduced," he said.

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Daly feels that we could learn a lot from the Australian game which was very attractive to watch. He instanced the Mayo game against the Australians and felt it had everything by way of spectacle and entertainment. "We should move with the times and change our rules where we feel it necessary. It should at least be done for a trial period to see if it does bring about an improvement," he said.

He is pleased with the present league set-up—"it should be a great money spinner"—but advocated a closed season from mid-November to mid-February as grounds and weather are against good football. Another effect of the new league set-up was that it placed great demands on the players, who, as amateurs, cannot devote themselves to training hard enough or long enough to meet the demands.

"This new league, while I welcome it, seems to make it virtually impossible for a team to win both the league and championship in the one year. Unless a team is very lucky in the matter of injuries it does not seem possible. It would involve very rigorous training and I wonder is it fair to ask for more from amateur players. And on top of their senior committments some of the players have to turn out in junior, under 21 and tournament games.

What happened against Roscommon? For Daly there is no simple answer to Mayo's fall. He does, however, feel that it was not over-confidence as many people in the county appeared to think.

"The lads were all on edge about this game and put a lot into training as they knew they had a tough job ahead of them. I feel it was an accumulation of a number of factors, not least of which was the day itself which was a leveller and reduced us to Roscommon's size. It was just one of those days when things don't go right for you," he said.

On the club front Daly feels that if there is a lowering of standards it is because too few clubs do the proper training and preparation for their games. "There are too many footballers who are togging out for games without doing any training. This approach is detrimental to the game at club level as it reduces the standard at a time when the public are looking for better performances," he said.

How about the future? Seamus Daly feels there are good days ahead.

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Mayo's share of the honours

by Johnny Mulvey



MAYO'S first appearance in an All-Ireland Senior Football Final was in the historic year of 1916 when represented by the famed Ballina Stephenites they were defeated by Wexford by 3-4 to 1-2. This was the first appearance of a Western team in the All-Ireland final proper. Mayo made their second appearance in the final in 1921 when Dublin beat them by 1-9 to 0-2.

In 1925 the Connacht championship had still not been decided by All-Ireland semi-final time. Mayo were nominated to represent Connacht and they defeated Wexford in the semi-final. Cavan played Kerry in the second semi-final but following objection and counter objection both teams were eliminated and so when Galway later defeated Mayo in the Connacht final they were declared All-Ireland champions. 1925, therefore, can be remembered as the year in which two Connacht teams met with an All-Ireland title at stake. The National Football League started in 1926 and was won by Laois. Mayo defeated Clare 2-3 to 0-0 at Birr in the 1930 semi-final but lost to Dublin by 1-3 to 0-5 in the final at Croke Park. Mayo Juniors won the first All-Ireland title to come to the county in 1933. They defeated Carlow 2-6 to 1-3 in the semi-final at Athlone; Donegal by 2-15 to 2-2 in the home final at Croke Park, and London by 3-7 to 2-4 in the final proper also at Croke Park. In 1932 Mayo beat Cavan in the senior semi-final by 2-4 to 0-8 but lost the final to Kerry 2-7 to 2-4. After they had earlier defeated Dublin (0-12 to 0 8) in Mullingar, Mayo minors accom-

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panied our juniors to Croke Park on the 8th October, 1933, for the minor final but lost to Kerry 4-1 to 0-9.

In 1934 the county won the first of six National League titles in a row beating Dublin in a replay at Croke Park by 2-4 to 1-5, after a 2-3 to 1-6 draw at Castlebar. 1935 saw the retention of the National League title when Mayo after dropping two points to Kildare defeated Louth, Dublin, Laois, Meath, Galway, Tipperary and Fermanagh. Our minors drew with Louth (1-4 each) in the minor semi-final and won the replay at Ballina by 3-5 to 1-2. Our first minor title was won also in 1935 when we beat Tipperary in the final by 1-6 to 1-1. Our seniors were expected to win but went down to Kildare in the semi-final after two shock goals by Tom Keogh in the early minutes of the game. Victory did come in 1936, however, when after defeating Kerry (1-5 to 0-6) in the semi-final at Roscommon, we annihilated Laois in the final by 4-11 to 0-5, to add our first senior title to our third successive National League. In the junior grade we beat Kerry (1-9 to 3-1) in the semi-final but lost to Wicklow in the final by a single point 3-3 to 2-5). In 1936 also our junior hurlers made history by beating Galway in the Connacht final; only to lose the semi-final to Waterford by 5-3 to 4-2.

1937 started with a fourth successive National League title when we beat Meath in the final at Croke Park by 5-4 to 1-8. In the earlier rounds we defeated Tipperary (4-7 to 1-1); Clare (2-7 to 0-5); Laois (3-4 to 0-2); Kerry (2-10 to 2-1); Offaly (5-4 to 1-5) and Galway (7-9 to 2-4). Alas! A bitter blow was to follow and we lost our crown when Cavan defeated us at Mullingar in the semi-final by 2-5 to 1-7. Our juniors were again beaten by a single point (1-7 to 1-6) in the home final, this time by Longford who later beat London (0-9 to 0-4). However, we were to win our second junior All-Ireland in 1950 and our third in 1957 when Dr. Mick Loftus captained the victorious team. In between we had won our second minor All-Ireland in 1953 when Eamonn Walsh was the winning captain. Eight Mayomen helped Connacht to win its first Railway Cup in 1934. They defeated Ulster (0-8 to 0-6) in the semi-final and Leinster by 2-9 to 2-8. Connacht had their second victory in 1936 when eight Mayomen contributed to their victory over Ulster in the final by 3-11 to 2-3. It was a third for Connacht in 1937 when they beat Munster by 2-4 to 0-5. The team was made up of ten Mayomen while J. McGowan (Mayo) came on as a sub. March 17th, 1938, also saw Connacht

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make it three in a row when they were winners over Munster in the final by 2-6 to 1-5 after an earlier victory over Ulster in the semi-final by 2-8 to 0-3. Once again nine Mayomen contributed to that victory and a tenth Mayoman, the late P. Flannelly came on as a sub. In addition, the Connacht captain on this occasion was Paddy Moclair. It was to be Connacht's last victory in the Railway Cup until 1951.

1938 saw our fifth successive National League victory. Galway beat us in the championship and went on to win the title. Wexford were defeated in the 1938 final by 3-9 to 1-3. Mayo's sixth National League victory in a row came in 1939 when Meath were defeated in the final by 5-9 to 0-6 at Ballina. Twenty-seven counties took part. Hopes were high high for an All-Ireland title and Galway (1938 champions) were dethroned in Connacht. We met Kerry in the semi-final which ended in a draw (0-4 each) but we crashed by 10 points in the replay. A County Board decision to withdraw from the National League in 1940 may have cost us a chance of making it eight titles in a row because after Galway had won the 1940 League Mayo returned and won the 1941 League by beating Dublin at Croke Park 3-7 to 0-7. In 1942 the League was suspended due to the Second World War and was not resumed until 1946. Mayo now known as the "league specialists" took the title again in 1949 when they beat Louth by 1-8 to 1-6. Our ninth League title came in 1954 when we beat Carlow by 2-10 to 0-3.

Alas! Mayo's eclipse in the 1939 championship signalled the end of a golden era and we did not succeed in winning a Connacht senior title again until 1948. We also won the All-Ireland Semi-Final but fell to Cavan in the final by 4-5 to 4-4. We lost the 1949 semi-final to Meath when well fancied. It is now history that we won the All-Ireland of 1950 by beating Louth (2-5 to 1-6) and retained the title by beating Meath in the 1951 final (2-8 to 0-9). That year Connacht recaptured the Railway Cup by beating Munster (1-9 to 1-8) Two more victories followed in 1957 and 1958.

Roscommon dethroned us in 1952 just as Mayo had dethroned them at Sligo in 1945. Since then we have won only 3 senior titles in Connacht—1955, 1967 and 1969.

In brief Mayo have won 30 Connacht senior titles since 1900; 18 junior titles since 1924; 20 minor titles since 1930; and 3 under 21 titles since 1967. The County has won 3 senior, 3 junior, 3 minor and 1 All-Ireland under 21 titles as well as 10 National Football League titles.





Top: *Another goal up . . . at Charlestown*

Bottom: *Hands up . . . at Crossmolina*

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Foirne Ceannais na hEireann i bPeil Sinsear

1887—Limerick 1-4; Louth 0-3.
1888—Not finished.
1889—Tipperary 3-6; Laois 0-0.
1890—Cork 2-4; Wexford 0-1.
1891—Dublin 2-1; Cork 1-9 (one goal was worth more any number of points at that time).
1892—Dublin 1-4; Kerry 0-3.
1893—Wexford 1-1; Cork 0-1 (not finished).
1894—Cork 1-1; Dublin 0-6. Cork, 1-2; Dublin 0-5 (not finished, awarded to Dublin).
1895—Tipperary 0-4; Meath 0-3.
1896—Limerick 1-5; Dublin 0-7.
1897—Dublin 2-6; Cork 0-2.
1898—Dublin 2-8; Waterford 0-4.
1899—Dublin 1-10; Cork 0-6.
1900—Tipperary 3-7; London 0-2.
Home Final: Tipperary, 2-20; Galway Krugers 0-1.
1901—Dublin 0-14; London 0-4.
Home Final: Dublin 1-2; Cork 0-4.
1902—Dublin 2-8; London 0-4.
Home Final: Dublin 0-6; Tipperary 0-5.
1903—Kerry 0-11; London 0-3. Home Final: Kerry 1-4; Kildare 1-4. Kerry 0-7; Kildare 1-4. Kerry 0-8; Kildare 0-2.
1904—Kerry 0-5; Dublin 0-2.
1905—Kildare 1-7; Kerry 0-5.
1906—Dublin 0-5; Cork 0-4.
1907—Dublin 0-6; Cork 0-2.
1908—Dublin 1-10; London 0-4.
Home Final: Dublin 0-10; Kerry 0-3.
1909—Kerry 1-9; Louth 0-6.
1910—Louth (Kerry refused to travel).
1911—Cork 6-6; Antrim 1-2.
1912—Louth 1-7; Antrim 1-2.
1913—Kerry 2-2; Wexford 0-3.
1914—Kerry 1-3; Wexford 2-0. Replay: Kerry 2-3; Wexford 0-6.
1915—Wexford 2-4; Kerry 2-1.
1916—Wexford 2-4; Mayo 1-2.
1917—Wexford 0-9; Clare 0-5.
1918—Wexford 0-5; Tipperary 0-4.
1919—Kildare 2-5; Galway 0-1.
1920—Tipperary 1-6; Dublin 1-2.
1921—Dublin 1-9; Mayo 0-2.
1922—Dublin 0-6; Galway 0-4.

FOIRNE CEANNAIS NA hEIREANN I bPEIL SINSEAR—Ar lean.

1923—Dublin 1-5; Kerry 1-3.
1924—Kerry 0-4; Dublin 0-3.
1925—Galway 3-2; Cavan 1-2 (instead of the official championship which was said to be non-effective).
1926—Kerry 1-3; Kildare 0-6. Replay: Kerry 1-4; Kildare 0-4.
1927—Kildare 0-5; Kerry 0-3.
1928—Kildare 2-6; Cavan 2-5.
1929—Kerry 1-8; Kildare 1-5.
1930—Kerry 3-11; Monaghan 0-2.
1931—Kerry 1-11; Kildare 0-8.
1932—Kerry 2-7; Mayo 2-4.
1933—Cavan 2-5; Galway 1-4.
1934—Galway 3-5; Dublin 1-9.
1935—Cavan 3-6; Kildare 2-5.
1936—Mayo 4-11; Laois 0-5.
1937—Kerry 2-5; Cavan 1-8. Replay: Kerry 4-4; Cavan 1-7.
1938—Galway 3-3; Kerry 2-6. Replay: Galway 2-4; Kerry 0-7.
1939—Kerry 2-5; Meath 2-3.
1940—Kerry 0-7; Galway 1-3.
1941—Kerry 1-8; Galway 0-7.
1942—Dublin 1-10; Galway 1-8.
1943—Roscommon 1-6; Cavan 1-6. Replay: Rosc'n 2-7; Cavan 2-2.
1944—Roscommon 1-9; Kerry 2-4.
1945—Cork 2-5; Cavan 0-7.
1946—Kerry 2-4; Roscommon 1-7. Replay: Kerry 2-8; Rosc'm 0-10.
1947—Cavan 2-11; Kerry 2-7.
1948—Cavan 4-5; Mayo 4-4.
1949—Meath 1-10; Cavan 1-6.
1950—Mayo 2-5; Louth 1-6.
1951—Mayo 2-8; Meath 0-9.
1952—Cavan 2-4; Meath 1-7. Replay: Cavan 0-9; Meath 0-5.
1953—Kerry 0-13; Armagh 1-6.
1954—Meath 1-13; Kerry 1-7.
1955—Kerry 0-12; Dublin 1-6.
1956—Galway 2-13; Cork 3-7.
1957—Louth 1-9; Cork 1-7.
1958—Dublin 2-12; Derry 1-9.
1959—Kerry 3-7; Galway 1-4.
1960—Down 2-10; Kerry 0-8.
1961—Down 3-6; Offaly 2-8.
1962—Kerry 1-12; Roscommon 1-6.
1963—Dublin 1-9; Galway 0-10.
1964—Galway 0-15; Kerry 0-10.
1965—Galway 0-12; Kerry 0-9.
1966—Galway 1-10; Meath 0-7.
1967—Meath 1-9; Cork 0-9.
1968—Down 2-12; Kerry 1-13.
1969—Kerry 0-10; Offaly 0-7.
1970—Kerry 2-19; Meath 0-18.

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