

1976



MAYO G.A.A. YEAR BOOK



50p

Contents include:
HENRY KENNY T.D. –
an appreciation by Jack Lynch

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a Happy Christmas

and

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HENRY KENNY

"A GRACEFUL COLOSSUS"

★ Jack Lynch, T.D.



MY FIRST sight of Henry Kenny was when he played midfield with the Mayo teams in the late 30's in Croke Park. At that time he seemed to me to be an unobtrusive but graceful collossus—paradoxical though this description may seem to be.

I compared him then in my own mind with some of his contemporaries or near contemporaries like Paddy Kennedy, Sean Brosnan of Kerry, Tommy Murphy of Laois, and other midfielders whose names and fame will live for many long years.

But I never actually met him during these years on or off the field. Cork were not in the forefront of football achievements in these years and by far the greater part of my inter-county activities were confined to hurling.

When our football fortunes improved in the early and middle 40's the only Western team we met in the All-Ireland series was Galway, that was in the semi-final of 1945. So I had to wait until Henry Kenny entered the Dail in later years to meet him personally and then his graceful and easy style of oratory in the House reminded me of his manner and style as a footballer. Just as he never overworked the football on the playing field, he never overused a phrase or over-elaborated his contribution to a debate; thus his performance seemed to me on and off the field always the more effective.

Because of my lack of opportunity to meet Henry Kenny during his and my playing days, my knowledge of him therefore is confined to our relations one with the other as members of Dail Eireann. Of course he had limited opportunity as a back-bencher of the Opposition during most of his period in the Dail but in the short two and a half years since he became a Parliamentary Secretary all his talents seemed to come to the surface. One thing that impressed me, and indeed many others as well, was that he never in any way was intolerant or tried to be overbearing.

He never pretended to have more knowledge about any particular subject which was being debated than he actually knew he possessed. Indeed, if he was asked a question the answer to which he did not know, he most readily and commendably admitted that he did not have the information but that if it was required he would seek it out and provide it another time.

More than that he never took advantage of a Deputy on the Opposition side who may not have sufficient knowledge of a partiular topic which was brought up for discussion and he invariably imported a sense of humour right through his replies to debates or parliamentary questions.



Long before his illness he had already endeared himself to political friend and foe alike and the courageous manner with which he bore his illness even enhanced that endearment if this was possible. It fell to my lot to engage Henry Kenny in debate in Dail Eireann on the very last day he was present in the House.

I know that even then he realised that this was to be his last day and that he was making his last contribution in Dail Eireann but right through he maintained his cheerful approach.

In fact, I believe he actually said to one of his colleagues after Question Time in the Dail that day that his replies to my supplementary questions were to be his last.

I feel certain that his lively wit is now making Heaven an even happier place. Suaimhneas siorrai d'a anam.

PADDY MOCLAIR, one of the great full forwards of all time, and present President of the County Board, described Henry Kenny as "Ireland's greatest midfielder."

"I lost a life-long friend when Henry died. We were reared together and the first day he went to school I took him along by the hand," he said.

He added: "Henry was a man who never said a word or did a thing to hurt anyone, and that was the way he was on the field, too. He was a true sportsman."

Another colleague, GERALD COURELL, has no doubt about the standards Henry set. "I would put him in the same class as Padraig Carney or Mick O'Connell as a midfielder. Never in my life did I see him deliberately foul an apponent. He was like O'Connell in that respect: he always played the ball."

He went on: "I have one abiding memory of him: we were playing in Boston and we were awarded a free fifty yards out. Henry came up and shot it over with the left foot, and if the posts had been twenty yards furthere he would still have landed it. It was one of the finest kicks I ever saw. "And another thing I will always remember him for was his great sense of humour."

JACKIE CARNEY, who played with Henry from 1934 to 1943, said that as a midfielder Henry Kenny had few peers in the history of Mayo football.

"In jumping for a high ball, and could he rise, he had a very effective ploy: he would spring or bounce off his opponent and land perfectly balanced to clear the ball or place a team-mate.

"He was one of the finest gentlemen it has been my privilege to know. He was always there to encourage players, never to criticise, and his great spirit helped us along the road to win those seven national leagues and the All-Ireland in 1936 During the nine years I played with him I never knew him to lose his temper.

"He took the knocks and gave them with that lovely smile of his. May God rest his his soul."

BRENDAN NESTOR, Galway All-Ireland footballer and President Connacht Council: "Henry Kenny was one of the most stylist centrefield players I ever saw. As an opponent on the field and as a man with whom I worked on the Connacht Council, he was one of nature's gentlemen."

DOC O'CALLAGHAN, Roscommon All-Ireland footballer: "I knew Henry from our schoolboy days when he was playing with St. Gerald's College, Castlebar. He and Paddy Kennedy, Kerry, were the two greatest midfielders I ever saw. There has been nothing since to equal them."

"Ní luide an t-suáilce í 'ranm,"
Chuidigh sé le lag 's le fauir,
Eisean a bhi lach 's mor,
Ard a cheim anois sa ghloir.

O Ghleannta Aontroma go Trá Lí,
Bhain sé cail le funneimh 's brí,
Ba é treise rith 's leim,
Nach minic a shil gur bhuail sé an speir.!

Thart faoi lár páirce ba é an rí,
Sharaigh orthu uilige a chlaoi,
Ba docht 's ba daingean a phéire cos,
'S ba crúbach cnámhach a phéire bos.

Ní raibh sé gangaideach mo léan,
Ach aoibh an ghhaire ar a bheal,
'S é ag briseadh frid an t-slua,
Nach mion 's nach minic a rug sé bua.

Glaine croí agus láidreacht géag,
Naisleacht nach rachfaidh choíche in éag.
Beart de reir briathair comhrá groí,
Geal í a leabaidh dTeach an Rí.

PADRAIC SEOIGHTHE.



Fr. Leo Morahan.

" . . Turkey & Ham Sessions . . 'Deanta in Eireann' Socials . . Club Conventions . . Scor . . "

THE IDEA seems to persist, in spite of frequent expressed correction, that the GAA is an association for the playing of football, some hurling, less handball and nothing more. It might be worth while for any club to spot-check among uncommitted residents in its area to ascertain what is it that the association represents for them. Indeed the idea is accepted among too many of the clubs themselves that activity means **field**-activity and hence only summer and outdoor activity. This in turn entails that the period of a club's active campaign is determined by the fortunes of its major field-teams. In such a situation the only club activities during winter are an annual dinner, a club convention, and some fund-raising social events. This set-up "would be scanned"; for it is perhaps more common than we care to admit.

The club's annual dinner became an accepted and desired feature of social life some ten or more years ago. It was an excellent idea even if not original; but in time it suffered, as do all the excellent ideas, by being repeated **ad nauseam.** Every other sizeable club in the area wanted to have an annual dinner — and why not?—except that one can have too much of a good thing.

Gilbert's observation is relevant:

When everybody's somebody,
Then no-one's anybody!

The local GAA club must not, of course, imagine that other clubs should not copy (if not indeed precede) us in this idea; rather it must inject its own new ideas and unique characteristics to create a variant, a difference which patrons will welcome and enjoy. There is no real substitute for good ideas. In view of the recurring decimal frequency of turkey-and-ham sessions, as well as the prohibitive costs of such full meals, thought is being seriously given by some organisation to holding a buffet and social event rather than the annual formal dinner. The idea must be balanced out by consideration for patrons who really do wish for an occasional social event for which to dress more formally and enjoy social formalities. Should a club revive "deanta in Eirinn" social and meal in its own local hall which was the forerunner of the organised annual dinner in an outside hotel? Or should these two forms alternate from year to year? Economic factors may well decide; but if they don't a club would do well to organise thoughtfully and

the easy cliche. It does seem imperative, for instance, that at either such function speeches should be few, short and well-prepared; and that concern should be given to the kind of entertainment provided — rather than handing over the entire party for a whole night to the merciless decibels of a typically modern music group. Finances do impose constraints but inevitably good ideas translated into home-produced entertainment will remove such inhibitions as lack of funds can entail.

The club convention is, as a rule, never taken with a deserving quotient of seriousness. Convention is the moment of decision: the practical opportunity for any member who, during the year has said: "What they should do about that rule is . . . ." Every single motion passed at any Easter Congress, and every single rule in the Treorai Oifigiuil, had to originate in some club and should have been debated and carried at that club's convention. Besides, it is at convention that a club makes its major decisions—such as, say, the election of officers—which cannot be reversed until next convention.

There remains the question of social events for fundraising—probably the most unwanted chore of all. Our brand of civilization has for some time past acquiesced in the belief that the easiest way to collect money is to organise a dance (after legal drinking hours); but there is the attendant hazard, among others, that normal band fees are high enough to make any treasurer think twice of running such a function at all. Could we in the present context re-direct club attention to another excellent idea — the Scor competitions? Some Mayo clubs, based in areas which are traditionally very rich in such talent, have never yet competed in the solo or group events of dancing, singing, question-time or instrumental music. Yet, at a time when we have become in many ways a nation of spectators, such events provide us with a real challenge; a challenge of **quality,** to the cheaper mass programmes so freely available. When properly organised the competitions have paid handsome financial reward into the bargain. Of course the preparation is more demanding than for a dance; but who can deny that this very preparation is itself well worth while as the very stuff with which the association should be involved.

Nil ga anois go mbeadh fo-chumann ar bith diomhaoin treis imeachtai na bliana ar an bpairc a bheith thart. Ni go minic a bhios bua an cheoil, no an rinnce, no an dramaiocht ag an bpeileadoir no ag an iomanai cliutuil; ach bionn daoine i ngach club ag a bhfuil a leitheidi agus ni bhionn ann ach an lan-tacaiocht a thabhairt doibh—an sort ceanna tacaiochta is a chug siadsan don fhoireann pairce i rith an tsamhraidh.

Ar scath a cheile a mhaireas muid.

Leon O Morchain.

THE PRIZE (£5)
offered by the Mayo Chairman
(through the well-known
"Gaelic Sport" column
"Junior Desk") for a school essay
on
"The G.A.A. and Advertising Standards"
has been divided between

John Greaney,
St. Patrick's Training College,

and

Joseph Woods,
Cloneyogan, Lahinch.

Unfortunately, pressure of time and space cause us to defer publication of the essays in this issue.

SCOR . . . AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE G.A.A.

says Gerry Henry



SCOR— or talent competition as it is known in some quarters—is an integral part of each G.A.A. Club in the country. Comortas Scor was set up by the executive of the G.A.A. to fill the void created by the lack of competitive matches during the winter months. It also fulfills the requirements (of Rule 3 (b)) of the Official Guide which states "the Association shall support traditional Irish dancing, music, song and other aspects of Irish culture."

As in other facets of the Association, Scor is much stronger in some Clubs and in some divisions than others.

The importance that the G.A.A. place on Scor can be gauged from the 1974 Congress when the following motion was passed unanimously—"that it be made obligatory for all County Boards to set up a "SPECIAL COMMITTEE" to promote, organise and run Scor competitions in each county."

This Committee was set up in Mayo with two representatives from each division, but it would be wrong to suggest that it is a 100% success. This is due mainly to the fact that members are nominated by divisions who have not genuine interest in the promotion of Scor at county level.

Some members of the Scor Committee feel that members of the County and Divisional Boards could show a little more enthusiasm for the Scor competitions at the various stages.

1975 was a year of mixed fortunes for Mayo competitors in both Scor na n-Og and Scor. In Scor na n-Og, Castlebar Mitchels and Ballyhaunis won one Connacht title each. The Mitchels, represented by Finnbar O'Reilly, Colm O'Neill and Finian Joyce, were successful in Question Time, while Sheila Kneafsey, Ballyhaunis, annexed the title for instrumental music.

Miss Kneafsey put up a great show at the All-Ireland Finals in Clara, Co. Offaly, while the Mitchels boys lost their chance of taking the "Crown" through missing a "soft one."

The full list of county winners in Scor na n-Og, 1975, is:

Figure dancing—Ardmoy: A. Finnerty, T. McDonnell, P. Staunton, M. Moyles, G. Jennings, M. McDonnell, J. Farrell, M. Staunton.

Instrumental music—Ballyhaunis: Sheila Kneafsey.

Solo ballad—Kiltane: Mary Reilly.

Novelty act—Breaffy: Maura King, Evelyn Bourke, Geraldine McDonagh.

Question time—Mitchels: F. O'Reilly, C. O'Neill, F. Joyce.

Recitation—St. Colman's: Frank Fahy.

Set dancing—Castlebar Mitchels: Una Neary, Mary Gavin, Edel Quinn, Debbie Groarke, Mary Gavin, Emer Downes, Noreen Redmond, Michelle Jordan.

Ballad groups—Westport: Patricia Brady, Maria McKenna, Ann Dever, Mary Connolly, Mary McNally.

In Scor, Mayo just won one Connacht title. Ballinrobe, represented by Mrs. Angela Gill, Mrs. C. O'Toole, Aine Whelan, Anne Conroy, Gearoid Mulrooney, Peter Fleming, Paddy Moran, Tom Treacy, won the set dancing. Despite their best efforts they were beaten in the All-Ireland Finals at the Leisureland, Galway, on the 5th April, 1975.

Even in defeat they did Mayo proud. Incidentally, two of the judges at the All-Ireland Finals were Una Ni Ghabhlain, Castlebar Mitchels, and Rev. Fr. P. Scahill, Balla, a fitting tribute to two of Scor's best.

Overall, Scor is in a healthy position in Mayo thanks to the trojan work that is being done by men like Billy Horan, Bob Triggs and a small band on enthusiasts.

"FOOTBALL BECAME A SUBJECT I AVOIDED"

★

by Tommy O'Malley



SPORT IN MANY WAYS is a reflection of life, and the year just ended incorporated for me moments of joy, disappointment, frustration and the unexpected.

When the competitive season resumed in February the Mayo team were in the fortunate position of having full points from their pre-Christmas ties in the League. After beating Wicklow we faced a formidable assignment in Derry at Castlebar. With three minutes of playing time left we were led by one point, and a Derry victory looked assured. However, J. P. Kean, the Claremorris man with the shrewd football brain, balanced matters and in a vertible cliff-hanger finish that man with the mighty kick, Mick Higgins of Westport, put us into the National League semi-final with a tremendous point from a placed ball fully sixty yards out. This win gave me the utmost satisfaction as it gave evidence of a new-found spirit in Mayo's play, and it refuted the widely held view that we lacked the capacity to fight back when in arreas. Meath were our opponents in the semi-final and not for the first time the doughty Midlanders proved a bogey for a Mayo team.

Three weeks after that disappointing display against Meath, my spirits were lifted when I was named as captain of the Mayo team. I appreciated the honour all the more because my uncle, Seamus, captained the first Mayo team to bring the Sam Maguire to



Mayo, and in my imaginative moments I had visions of history repeating itself. After our anticipated easy victory over London in the opening round we faced Roscommon on their home ground. Fine displays by Ger Feeney, Ger Farragher and Frank Burns earned us the laurels, and so the stage was set for our encounter with Sligo in the Connacht final. Sligo, bidding for their first Connacht title, were leading by seven points with twenty minutes to go, but Mayo, manifesting that spirit which they displayed against Derry in the League, rallied in magnificent style and forced a replay, to be decided in Castlebar. The advantage of a home venue made us favourites in the replay, but Sligo, taking their chances, recorded an historic win.

Although the defeat had a positive aspect in the sense that there seemed to be hope for the future, I would not be human if I did not feel despondent. Football became a subject I avoided, but my interest was soon reawakened by our local juvenile team. I had been appointed their trainer by my club and the enthusiasm and dedication they displayed soon banished the effects of the Connacht final. In fact one of my proudest moments was when their captain, Jimmy Maughan, was presented with the South Mayo cup.

I do not wish to criticise referees, as I feel they have a very difficult task. However, I am of the view that steps will have to be taken by all units of the Association to formulate rules which will give more adequate protection to players. There is also a grave need for uniformity in the interpretation of rules and a positive step in the creation of more referees might be the holding of instruction courses by college councils and boards.

I mentioned at the outset that sport can provide the unexpected. On my way back from France on the boat, the "St. Patrick," I met Mickey O'Sullivan, the Kerry captain. Naturally our thoughts turned to football and the All-Ireland, and Mickey proclaimed that Kerry would win the All-Ireland if Oggy Moran was placed at centre half forward. I disagreed with his viewpoint, holding that Dublin would win and that Moran's best position was on the wing, either in defence or attack. Subsequent events proved the correctness of Mickey's judgment. Kerry need have no worries when Mick O'Dwyer retires.

The year 1975 then was like the celebrated curate's egg—good in spots. Let's hope 1976 will realise the dream of every Mayo Gael—the winning of the All-Ireland.

EAST MAYO

DIVISION DOMINATED BY CHARLESTOWN



CHARLESTOWN—UNDER-21 COUNTY CHAMPIONS.

CHARLESTOWN, in the doldrums of Mayo football since the mid-sixties, bounded back into the Mayo G.A.A. limelight in 1975 with some splendid successes, including the winning of the Mayo Under 21 football title.

I predicted at a time when football was at its lowest ebb in this citadel of the G.A.A. in Mayo that Charlestown would make a slow but complete recovery. This they did with the aid of the faithful few, capably led by Mr. Ernie Salmon, the "father" of East Mayo football, whose unceasing and tireless efforts in the interests of the code marks him as an institution in Mayo in general and Charlestown in particular. Those who also helped in bringing about the revival included Hubert Flannery, Bobbie O'Connell, John Lenihan Marty Horkan and Tom Gavigan.

by Mick O'Connell

The lesson learned by Charlestown which could be applied to every area was that success would come if particular attention was paid to under age football and the involvement of the youth in the administration of the club. At the last annual general meeting Bobbie O'Connell and Ernie Salmon stood down to allow two youthful members, Aiden Henry and Pat Walsh, to be elected chairman and secretary respectively. They with the other members of the committee worked hard and diligently in bringing about the successful completion of a very heavy fixture list involving upwards of 40 matches. Charlestown certainly set the pace in East Mayo football in 1975, and their fast, open brand of football was reminiscent of the great Charlestown Sarsfields sides of the past.

Their success in the Under 21 championship overshadowed the victories they gained in the other grades, and the first real indication of the side's potential was evidenced in the Divisional decider when Charlestown defeated the 1974 Eastern title holders, Ballyhaunis, with a brisk, workmanlike performance.

In the county semi-final they proved too good for Westport and overcame a fine Garrymore side in the final, the second half of which was particularly exciting. A great goal by Brian Hegarty, however, clinched the issue for Charlestown. This was indeed a great team effort but specific mention must be made of the part played by the captain of the side, Pat Walsh, and by Eamonn Brett, who were the driving forces behind the team. The panel also included: John Lundy, Marty Regan, Fintan Brett, Tommy Carney, Francie Henry, Joe Munds, Brian Hegarty, Declan O'Donnell, John Donohue, Aiden Henry, Derek Henry, Denis Carney, Leo Henry and T. Giblin.

MINORS AND JUNIORS WIN

The foundation of the Charlestown minor football team was laid in 1974 when Charlestown won the county under 16 title and it was generally felt that the prospects for the team were good. The players were brought together and trained and won the East Mayo championship, beating Aughamore in the final following a replay. They won their way to the county final but went under to a fit and fast St. Gerard's side, the Southern champions. Charlestown were handicapped to a degree in this game as they had to line out without their ace marksman and free-taker, Joseph Munds.

Charlestown also carried off the West Mayo junior football tile, powered by the bulk of the Under 21 side, and in the decider against Kiltimagh they gave an excellent display of high powered football to emerge victorious. Charlestown went under to Ballintubber in the county semi-final in a game which was marred by the unfortunate accident to the Charlestown full-forward, Michael Gilroy, who is wished a speedy recovery.

Charlestown were also very prominent in the Under Age competitions—Primary, Under 14 and Under 16. They qualified for the East Mayo final in the Under 16 competition and were extremely unlucky to lose to Aughamore, a feature of the game being the number of times Charlestown hit the woodwork.

The dedicated back-room staff and the zeal and determination of the players made Charlestown the leading football force in East Mayo competitions in 1975, and all the club members and the players are to be commended on the success which attended their efforts.

SWINFORD WIN

Swinford continues to remain in the lead in the Primary Schools section and had an excellent win over Kiltimagh in the Eastern final.

Aughamore Under 14 footballers were the second East Mayo team to win a county final in 1975.

The complete line-up of the East Mayo finals is as follows:—

Primary Schools: Swinford beat Kiltimagh.

Under 14—Aughamore beat Swinford.

Under 16: Aughamore beat Charlestown.

Minor: Charlestown beat Aughamore.

Junior: Charlestown beat Kiltimagh.

Under 21: Charlestown beat Ballyhaunis.

Canon Henry Cup: Kiltimagh beat Charlestown.

Ballaghaderreen and the O'Mahony Brothers--

★

Fiercely

Loyal

To

Mayo

Football

★

by Tom Shiel

WHERE A WINDING STREAM cuts an irregular borderline between Mayo and Roscommon at Magheraboy, near Ballaghaderreen, Cork migrant Stephen O'Mahony built himself a grocery shop, and later for his sons John, Dan and Stephen . . . a football pitch.

Usually deserted, Kilmovee sportsfield, three miles away, produced few footballers of worth, but the ever functional Magheraboy family pitch welded the three O'Mahony youngsters into performers with distinct promise.

Ten years have passed and the Sundays and the summer evenings have quietened in the small pitch where miskicks often drove the ball across the stream into Roscommon. But on other pitches, in front of bigger crowds, the name O'Mahony has assumed a far greater significance.

Quiet spoken 22-years-old John, who teaches in St. Nathy's College, won an All-Ireland minor medal with Mayo in 1971. Two years ago he won an Under-21 runners-up medal, but last year took the premier medal when Mayo beat Antrim in a replayed All-Ireland final.

Ideally built for a defensive position, John is a player not to be easily hustled off the ball, and since his senior debut for Mayo in the league against Galway three years ago, he has, with the exception of short breaks, maintained the left corner back position since.

Dan O'Mahony (24) and Stephen (19) have spiritual vocations as well as vocations to football, and they are in their last and first years respectively in Maynooth College.

Like John, Dan has helped in Ballaghaderreen's upward progression from junior ranks, winning minor, junior, intermediate, Under-21 and senior medals with the club from 1968 to 1973.

Dan never played senior football for Mayo but won Under-21 Connacht medals in 1970 and 1971. He became the first non-county playerd from the province to play in the Railway Cup competition when he lined out for the Combined Universities.

John followed Dan, and Stephen followed John from the now closed Magheraboy National School to St. Nathy's College where regular training rubbed off to the best possible effect on the eager brothers.

Stephen, who has now gained a place on the Ballaghaderreen senior team along with John, won juvenile and minor Connacht titles while in Nathy's, but along with these medals Dan also won a senior one.

Former Nathy's president and trainer of the senior team from 1956 to 1968, Fr. Tom Lynch, now curate in Kilmovee, looks back on the O'Mahonys and his other football pupils with justified relish.

In 1957 with former Mayo star Mick Ruane in their ranks, Nathy's won the Hogan Cup and in other years the Achonry Diocesan College had players like Dermot Earley (Roscommon), Barnes Murphy, Tom Colleary and Paddy Henry (Sligo), Mel Flanagan (Roscommon), and Sean Kilbride and Con Moynihan of Mayo.

"The three O'Mahony lads were all great enthusiasts and I will especially remember John for his magnificent, unselfish displays at full-back as a juvenile," said the former history teacher who was for some years president of the Connacht Colleges Council.

John is not particularly despondent over Mayo's relatively poor showing in the League and says that in the light of experience it may augur better for their chances in the 1976 championship.

"Sligo were worse than our present state at this stage last year. I am sure that despite the critics, Johnny Carey can make something of the team—and there are plenty of critics in Mayo," he said.

Despite the signs of revival in the Galway camp, John feels the Tribesmen will not have reached their best by championship time and with Sligo and Roscommon displaying the form they have shown of late, it should be Mayo's year in Connacht.

But he warned that unless the Mayo team, which is mostly composed of players from the 1974 All-Ireland Under 21 team, are to make the big time then they must do it in the next two years, or never.

"Even though we have lost, the spirit of the All-Ireland winning Under 21 side is still with us. But one only plays Under 21 football for three years, while playing for the seniors involves a ten year commitment, so perhaps there is a difference of attitude on the part of the players."

Even though the cathedral town of Ballaghaderreen is in Roscommon, for administrative purposes it has always staunchly supported Mayo in football, a loyalty that probably dates to the turn of the century, when the town was encompassed in an enlarged East Mayo boundary.

For John O'Mahony, whose mother comes from Bangor Erris, and his father from Dunmanway, Co. Cork, there was no question as to where his football loyalty would go. "The greatest rivals and the greatest supporters come from border areas and that's how my love for football and for Mayo came into being."

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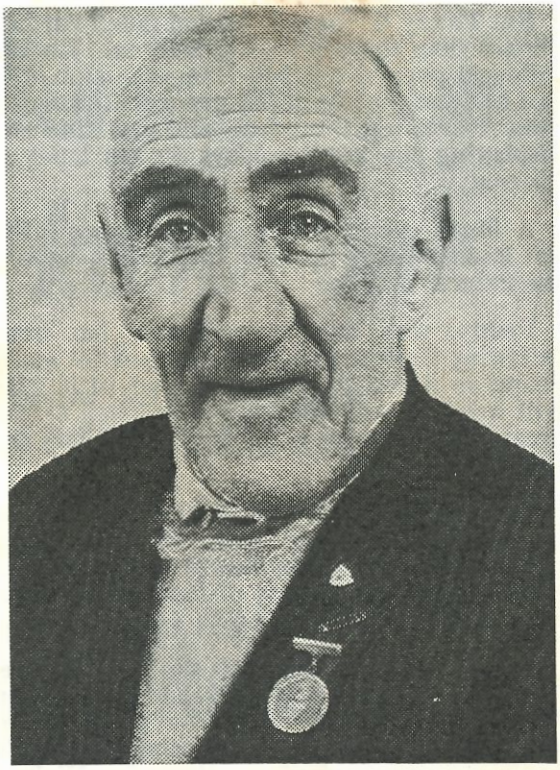
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"TRAINER" GREHAM'S UNFAILING LOYALTY TO MAYO



WRAPPED UP in a heavy, dark overcoat, cap pulled down tightly over the eyes, likely as not pipe in mouth; just as likely bubbling with effervescent enthusiasm over some football match or other.

That surely is Pappy Greham, a part of the Ballina scene and as regular in his routine as the post office clock which looks down O'Rahilly Street every day on Paddy as he makes his way towards Clarkes newsagency and cake shop.

by Terry Reilly

But Paddy Greham is known much further abroad than the confines of Ballina. He has followed sucessive Mayo teams far and wide and has had a place in the pre-match parades, jauntily waving the green and red flag and displaying the same colours on the lapel of his coat.

A Mayo occasion of any importance without Paddy would be akin to Hamlet without the Prince!

Paddy, who lives in Ardnaree, has been following Ballina and Mayo football for many years; so much so that he is part of it. He will readily talk about the thirties, of the great Gerald Courell, Paddy Moclair and the late Henry Kenny.

He goes through the forties reeling off scorelines and names with obvious relish, giving fair stick too to that referee who had charge of the All-Ireland of 1948 when Cavan beat Mayo by a point (4-5 to 4-4).

But he does not dwell on the subject, preferring to jump on to 1950 and 1951 when Mayo did the county and the game proud with successive Sam Maguire Cup wins. He has a special word of gratitude for Michael O'Hehir who mentioned him over the radio: now the voice of O'Hehir brings a gleam to his eye—it is the signal which sparks off the remembrance of old glory again.

Paddy is known to his friends as "Trainer" and he loves it. He was so christened by Mayo players because of his unfailing attendance at Mayo training sessions in Ballina in 1950 and 1951 when Gerald Courell and Jackie Carney, the Babe Ruth and Pocket Hercules greats of the Thirties, were in charge of the team. Paddy religiously togged out in the number 18 jersey at training sessions and his inherent good humour and love of a laugh broke the monotony of many a gruelling training session.

Paddy's favourite of that era was Tom Langan, the great full-forward from Ballycastle. Tom endeared himself to Paddy when he went to his rescue in Croke Park in 1950 when an official tried to order "Trainer" out of the pre-match parade. Another favourite footballer was John Morley.

Paddy was at the 1936, 1950 and 1951 All-Ireland finals. He was at the 1967 All-Ireland U-21 replay, too, at Ballinasloe when Mayo defeated Kerry. The referee in charge that day, John Moloney, assured himself of a much kinder remembrance than the 1948 man when he called upon Paddy to throw in the ball to start the match.

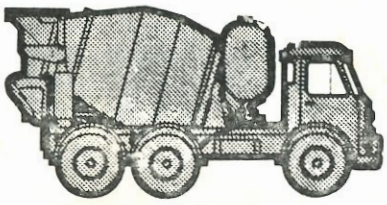
More recently, Paddy did the honours again, this time in conjunction with the County U-14 final when he was called upon by the Chairman of the County Board, Rev. Fr. Leo Morahan, to present the tropy to the captain of the Ballina team, Nial Heffernan.

"Trainer" is a loyal member of the Ballina Branch of the PTAA and a few years ago he received his gold pin to mark fifty years in the organisation.

When I met him recently Paddy was looking forward to two things—Mayo back in Croke Park on All-Ireland Day, and an invitation to the annual dinner of Ballina Stephenites.

"Sure ye won't forget me"? he asked.

"No." I assured him as he held my hand in that typical embrace. For who could ever forget "Trainer" Greham!



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Old footballers never die, they keep on winning medals!

by "Tor"

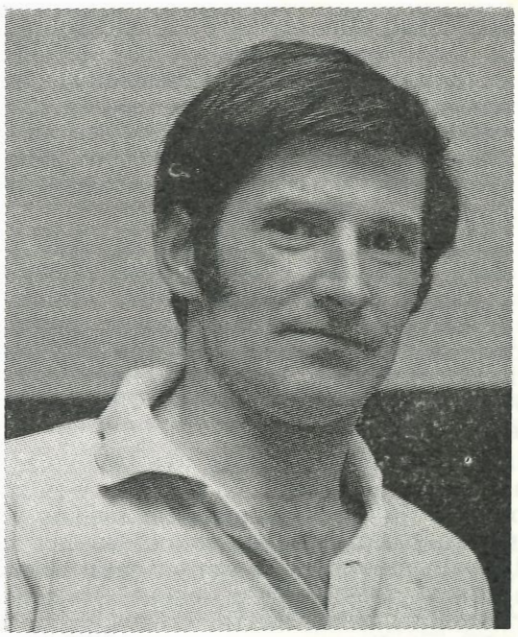
WHATEVER ELSE one might say abou footballers, never, just never, say they don't come back! For footballers are like mining prospectors, panning away for their gold: sometimes they find it, other times they don't, but they keen on searching. And once they strike a vein they press on relentlessly!

A case in point was Crossmolina's junior championship success this year after a thirteen years lapse, or rather the bridging of a thirteen years gap by two players who saw colleagues come and go while they battled on.

The men in question are John Joe Tolan and P. J. Loftus, two of the keymen in 1962 just as they were in 1975. To gain a second junior medal after such a lapse in time points to the kind of perseverance everyone likes to see rewarded.

Both played minor football together, lining out for Belmullet in 1959 when Crossmolina did not have an U-18 team. The team was beaten by five points by Carras in the final after beating Ballina, the holders, in the North Mayo final.

The following year P. J., a fitter by trade, and John Joe, who runs a thriving victualling business in the heart of the town, made their way on to the junior team, and in 1961 they were on the team which was beaten in the county final by Garrymore.



J. J. TOLAN



P. J. LOFTUS

Consolation was to come the following year when Crossmolina beat the Neale in the county final, thus giving P. J. and John Joe their first county medals. The following year they were on the Crossmolina team which lost to Castlebar in the county senior championship final, but they fulfilled an ambition of a medal in the grade by gaining places on the North Mayo team which beat Ballina in the 1968 county final.

Lanky P. J., of course, had by then progressed to the Mayo senior team where his tremendous high fetching ability was a decided asset at midfield. He won two Connacht S.F.C. medals with his county in 1967 and 1969, and a National League medal in 1970, as well as a Wembley Tournament medal.

John Joe Tolan, one of the most elegant and accurate kickers of a ball, won two Connacht junior championship medals with his county in the Sixties, but so far has failed to win the medal he wanted most, funnily enough at Intermediate level. Of course, Crossmolina made several great bids to win the Intermediate crown but somehow always fell just short of the target.

Perhaps now that Crossmolina are Intermediate again John Joe will realise his most cherished ambition of all and fill the only notable void in his fine collection of club championship medals.

RETIRED PREMATURELY

P. J. Loftus retired from club and county football a few years ago, prematurely many felt, not least his own club selectors who cajoled him back into the beloved maroon strip again this year. His presence added weight and strength to the attack and he turned in several fine displays en route to the final.

His brother, Emmet, figured at midfield on the Crossmolina side, playing with as much distinction in that position as his brother had previously.

Neither P. J. nor John Joe have any firm football plans for the future. Almost at the end of chequered careers on the field they are now happy to play from game to game without questioning what the future holds.

But with the fine performances of newly promoted junior champions in recent years who is to say John Joe Tolan and P. J. Loftus won't achieve that elusive Intermediate gold in 1976?

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ALL-STAR DUGGAN OVERLOOKED BY MAYO AS A MINOR

★



JIMMY DUGGAN.

Words by Tom Shiel

JIMMY DUGGAN was only a sapling of a youngster, that heartbreak 1966 Connacht Final day in Castlebar, but he planted the seeds of Mayo's defeat when Liam Sammon took his pinpoint pass in the agonising closing minutes and kicked Galway's winning point.

This was Duggan, the high fielding stylist, at his best, and the same year, though only nineteen, he won his only All-Ireland medal, gaining his spurs with the history making three in a row side.

Earlier in the year he had captained St. Jarlath's College, Tuam, to victory in another All-Ireland Final with with such an immaculate display of football that it was hard to believe that three years before, as captain of Claremorris minor team, he was ignored by the Mayo selectors.

Born to Galway parents, but having spent four years living in Claremorris, Jimmy Duggan admits to-day that he might have played for Mayo had he been given any recognition as a minor.

But there were other guiding forces in the direction of his loyalty, not the least of which was the fact that his mother comes from Corofin, near Tuam, and his father, Joe, from Annaghdown, near the shores of Lough Corrib.

Joe Duggan played for Galway from 1939 to 1947, and his brother-in-law, the famed Paddy Stephens of Corofin, won an All-Ireland medal with the maroon and white in 1938.

In his early footballing years Jimmy Duggan played juvenile, minor and senior with Claremorris, making a masterly partnership at midfield with Mick Connaughton, whom he describes as the best minor he ever saw playing football.

But he was also a dual player, well able to swing a hurley with purpose, and made the Mayo minor team in 1964, but forgotten by the football selectors, the late Fr. Paddy Mahon in St. Jarlath's College began to influence him into a career with Galway.

But all that is a decade past and now a much older, much heavier and more experienced Duggan is bidding to gain a permanent place on the Galway team after a year long lay-off because of injury.

A popular bank official in Galway City, his many successes with Galway has justified his loyalty to his ancestoral county but he is forever interested in the fortunes of "unpredictable" Mayo.

"Club football is better in Mayo than in Galway, but at senior inter-county level they don't seem to give everything to their game as Galway players do.

"There seems to be a boundary of blood between the counties. Mayo are unpredictable, some of the spirit seems to be lacking but the amazing thing is they have tremendous minor teams that continually show Galway a clean pair of heels.

"But the spirit of Mayo club football is good and I believe it has something to do with refereeing. Good refereeing will raise the standard of club football," said Jimmy.

The talkative Jimmy, whose parents live at James Street, Claremorris, remembers especially his tussle with Joe Langan and P. J. Loftus in a league game against Mayo in Ballina in 1968.

In the process of getting fit for an up and coming young Galway side he has been keeping a special watch on Mayo who are always the Tribesmen's greatest rivals and the man he has most admiration for is young John P. Kean of Claremorris.

"He is a really gifted player who does not always show his best, and another fine player in a different mould is Ger Feeney who is a great competitor, has great heart, and is a great team man.

"Sean Kilbride is an excellent player, and Tommy O'Malley would be a fine footballer but for the fact that he is so inconsistent," said Jimmy.

If Mavo beat Leitrim, and all goes well for Jimmy Duggan, he will line out for Galway in MacHale Park on June 6th, just a decade from his sparkling championship debut with the solitary winners of the three-in-a-row.

★

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THE HALLMARK OF GARRYMORE—



A Huge Hunger To Succeed

by GER FARRAGHER

THE GLORY of playing county football and the stardom which it brings to the player is well known to most people, but the road to the top is rough and narrow, and the club's part must never be forgotten in this ascent. The query is: What are the determining factors behind success of club, county and individual?

For a player to be honest in his appraisal of the above he would need to go right back to the start of his football career. This for me was at Under-13 level, with a then little club called Garrymore. In case you may not know where that is, well it is outside Claremorris and before you come to Hollymount. In other words, sandwiched between the two towns. Success at under age levels was scarce but enjoyment in playing football was more important then.

However, that ideal soon vanished as the club captured the Intermediate title in 1969, to join ranks with the "big guns" in Mayo football. By then, guided by a small band of dedicated officials, Garrymore possessed a hunger for success. It was only at this stage I really experienced that same appetite. This, I believe, won me a place on the Mayo minor team of 1970 to '71 with which I had the honour of winning an All-Ireland medal. In actual fact there were four Garrymore players on that team—Michael Cunningham, Michael Griffin, Frank Harty and myself. This provided great incentive within our club for in the previous years county recognition was hard come by for players within our club. In the same year, 1970, Garrymore were badly beaten in the senior county final by Castlebar. This might have discouraged most teams, but not us, for the spirit was only kindling at that stage.

The club, though small in size, possessed a fierce determination to succeed. This to me is the hallmark of Garrymore. I am not just referring to players, but to officials and supporters. The players, well, I believe, there are no more dedicated in the country. Officials, small in number, but possessing a hunger for work, and last, but not least, our supporters. Like officials, they too, are small in number but sometimes even more determined for success than either players or officials.

Maybe I have strayed a little but I feel the above comment could not be omitted. This drive to success brought us to our second county final in 1973, but, alas, beaten again, this time Knockmore the conquerers. The theme "try and try again," became the club's anthem. In the same year I was on the Mayo Under 21 team which unluckly lost to Kerry in Ennis. A double disappointment within a space of three weeks!



Brother T. J. fielding high.

However, endeavour brings its reward and this was already evident in the case of both Garrymore and Mayo. All the heartaches, all the near misses were forgotten as the club captured the county senior title and the Paddy Moclair Cup. Our goal had been achieved, all the hard work was not in vain. Likewise, Mayo Under-21 footballers came roaring back to win the title; again I had the honour of playing with this great team.

Double success, and then I achieved my life long ambition, a place on the Mayo senior team. By now, playing with a successful club and the county senior team, I felt satisfied with my football progress. Garrymore retained the senior title this year but the county team suffered a big disappointment in losing the Connacht final. This does not worry me and it is my hope and wish that the spirit that has sustained our club will become a part of the Mayo team. That it will drive my fellow wearers of the red and green and me to attain success that our mentors and followers so righly deserve.

THE WEST'S AWAKE!

says Christy Loftus

A REMARKABLE upsurge of interest in football in West Mayo was witnessed during the past season with teams from the division contesting the finals of three major county competitions and being successful in two of them.

The successes were, of course, registered by Islandeady in the intermediate grade and Westport who annexed the senior league title against all the odds.

But while these clubs stole the limelight there were other encouraging and heartening signs which augur well for future successes.

Perhaps the most significant of these concerned the Achill club who hit West Mayo with a bang in under age football climbing once again to the pinnacle from which they had been toppled in recent times.

Success in under age football is nothing new in Achill. In the sixties they were a law unto themselves in juvenile and minor grades. This role was lost for a time in the last five years, but a revival of interest, evident last year, culminated in a triple success for the club in the division this year.

They emerged triumphant in under 14, under 16 and in minor. In the county semi-finals they went under in the under 16 and under 14 players reached the county final minor grades to strong opposition, while the before being beaten by a strong Ballina side for the title.

Behind the great Achill comeback were such people as Padraic Seoighe, Tommy Johnstone and Josie Healy, men who have masterminded many successes in the past, and while county success eluded Achill this year it is a goal that appears within their grasp in the near future.

Another club to emerge from the shadows in 1975 was Ballintubber who shook off the gloom that several junior championship defeats had built up to get back on the sunny success trail again.

They had to come from behind to earn the honours and after they had gone under to Kilmeena in an early round many people were again writing them off. But a new determination built up by the officers of the

club saw the team battle their way into the semi-finals of the Cusack Cup where they were once again pitted against arch rivals Kilmeena.

On this occasion the Abbeysiders were better prepared for the fray. Kilmeena were labouring under the role of favourites and rarely got into the battle for honours. With the experienced Michael Prendergast ranged alongside the youthful and industrious Paddy Burke, Ballintubber controlled mid-field and the highly rated Kilmeena side were soon cut down to size.

Ballintubber had a monopoly of the play all through the game but in the closing stages had to withstand a late Kilmeena rally which almost thwarted their ambitions.

In the second semi-final Parke had once more gained entry to the semi-finals and they were pitted against a strong Tourmakeady side. In a brilliant tour de force the light, young and enthusiastic Parke team literally ran rings around the Tourmakeady side to get a crack at the Cusack Cup.

Parke's performance in that semi-final was such that they commanded the respect of all for the final but, Ballintubber, because of their greater experience, were installed as favourites to take the title.

That favouritism proved justified with Ballintubber finally making the break-through onto the county stage. The best efforts of Parke players such as Martin Molloy, Tommy Flynn and Harry Flynn (defence), Frank MacHale (midfield) and Jimmy Flynn, Michael O'Boyle and Frank Duffy in attack proved in vain.

The all round strength and the experience of such as Ballintubber's Christy Feeney, Joe Dillon, Tommy Lally, Burke and Prendergast, Ger Feeney, Jimmy Lally, Dave Kelly, Ray Prendergast and Al McDonnell proved too much and Ballintubber captured the Cusack Cup on a score of 2-10 to 1-9.

And while Ballintubber were clambering to the top their neighbours, Islandeady, were consolidating their position at the top.

They followed up their junior championship win of the previous year with another county title to add to their recent success story and in the process proved their success in the junior grades was no flash in the pan.

They commenced their campaign with a good win over an improved Kiltimagh side to win their way through to the semi-final where their opponents were another West Division side, Balla.

The teams met at Castlebar and Balla proved their high rating by turning in a good display but it was not sufficient to overcome the doughty battlers from Islandeady.

Meanwhile Ballinrobe, with impressive wins over Kilmaine, Burrishoole and Bohola, won their way through to a final which many people expected them to win.

But those who plumped for the South Mayo side reckoned without the resilience of the Islandeady outfit. On a wild and windy September Sunday at MacHale Park, Islandeady triumphed. Their dogged determination proved a decisive factor. Overall they had to concede finesse and ability to a fine footballing Ballinrobe side but strength and endurance proved to be the qualities for success which carried the day for the men from the "Isles."

Stephen Sweeney, Michael Collins, Enda Kenny, Joe Moylette, Johnny McCormack, Michael Sweeney, Gerry Gibbons, Kieran Kenny, Jackie Diffley, Michael McCormack and the veteran Brendan Needham, along with their team-mates carved out a new niche for Islandeady in the Mayo GAA story to herald the entry of their club into senior football in the county.

For too long success in senior football had eluded Westport. Always a great bastion of the game, which had produced such renowned and unforgettable performers as the late Purty Kelly and Tommy Hoban, the town in recent years had nothing but mere memories to console them for their failure to make the big breakthrough.

True the club had a monotonous list of successes in underage competitions which only tended to frustrate as people asked where all their good young footballers went to. There was no doubt that Westport had produced more young talent than any other club in the division but still their senior team seemed no nearer to success.

The club's under 21 side won the West title early in the year. Nobody took any notice. It wasn't the first time.

They were drawn against Aughamore in their opening game of the senior championship and suffered a heavy defeat at Ballinrobe. And again nobody took any great notice. It wasn't the first time.

But now the talent had blossomed and youngsters like Paraic Moran, Jim Browne, John Kilcoyne, Seamus Gill, Eamon Ketterick and Tom Nevin were doing their stuff and putting it up to the more experienced players to pull their weight.

After a poor start to the league (they were beaten at home by Burrishoole) they began to make their mark. In the return clash with Burrishoole they reversed the decision and began to improve from there on. They finished their section of the league on level terms with the new Intermediate champions, Islandeady, and in the play-off became the first team to lower the pennant of the recently crowned neighbouring club.

It was a start but not one that made everyone look up. Westport were due to meet Ballaghaderreen in the semi-final and few outside those closely connected with the team considered a Westport victory likely.

The scoreline caused mild ripples in football circles. Westport won the encounter by three points (1-10 to 1-7) and deservedly so.

Most followers of the game were happy to see Westport win but there was no great enthusiasm because they were to be faced by seemingly unbeatable Garrymore in the final and the outcome of that was a foregone conclusion. Or so it seemed.

Rarely had a team been so confidently expected to win as were Garrymore for that League final. They had in action most of the side that had so completely overwhelmed all opposition in the senior championship and had every right to expect a win.

But the scene in Westport had changed and not merely on the surface. It was 'only' a league title at stake but Westport were out to win it and were training hard for their difficult task.

The usefulness of that preparation was readily witnessed at MacHale Park when Garrymore fell to the all action style of the Westport Mauraders. Playing against a strong breeze they were a goal up after one minute and two goals and a point in front after five.

Midway through the first half they had again shook the Garrymore side's comeback



STEPHEN SWEENEY—one of the West's rising Mayo stars.

effort with a third goal that left them four points in front. At the break the teams were on level terms (3-2 to 1-8) but that early Westport flurry had laid the foundations for victory.

With the breeze favouring them and still full of spirit Westport continued to rush and hurry Garrymore into mistakes and when the full time whistle blew they had accomplished their task. Westport had two points to spare with a score of 3-6 to 1-10.

It was an admirable climax to a year which started drearily for the Westport players and officials. Nobody, not least their victims Garrymore, begrudged Westport their success.

Their current county player was a star for Westport in the final and fittingly he provided the leadership which the younger players not alone needed but deserved. And he was not the only one. Long serving players like John Reynolds, Chris Grady, Padraic Cunningham, Pat Coughlin, Michael Grady and Peter Reynolds all responded to the promptings of their younger team-mates to bring their first ever senior success to the town and to bring to a close another good year for football in the West.

CAREY'S UNENVIABLE TASK

by Sean Rice

HAVING BEGUN on a high note, it dropped a wearisome end as so many of the past twenty-five years have done. New optimism had been invested in a young team, going well in the League, and hell-bent it seemed on righting the wrongs of previous years.

They qualified for the League semi-final. They were beaten by Meath, but undespairingly they began to regroup for the Championship and looked good in beating Roscommon in the first round.

They were chary about travelling to Sligo for the final. Sligo were on the crest of a winning wave, having beaten Galway in the opening round. Sligo hadn't won the championship for forty-seven years and all Ireland was hoping that this would be their year and that Michael Kearins would win the medal they said he deserved.

Kearins did win that medal, but not before the game went to a re-play in Castlebar and which might never have gone so far if Mayo had taken all the chances they were given during a great resurgence in the first match.

There was no great concern in Mayo about that defeat. The team was young and the displays of Ger Feeney, Michael Higgins, Frank Burns, Richie Bell, Sean Kilbride, John P. Kean, Ted Webb and Tommy O'Malley held out hope of imminent glory. The investment was still a good one.

But the promise has now begun to diminish. While Mayo impressed in the opening round of the current League against Sligo, they began to slide against Meath and a couple of weeks later were decisively beaten by Galway at Charlestown.

What that game revealed above all else was a need for leadership on the field . . . someone to urge the others to greater endeavour, to bring out further funds of energy and spunk even when the players themselves think they have nothing more to give.

That's the task that lies ahead for th team's new manager, Johnny Carey . . . a unenviable task, but one nevertheless i which he will be expected to succeed.

But before the team gets better it ma very well have to get worse. It may, for in stance, necessitate the humiliation of relega tion to jar the players into greater sacrifice and deeper soul searching.

The underage teams on which Mayo ha depended for glory over the past decad failed to make it this year also. But the are entitled to a respite. They have don well over the years.

The minors were beaten by Roscommo in Sligo, who went on to take the Connach crown. But they did win the Connach League title . . . a competition they hav dominated from its beginning.

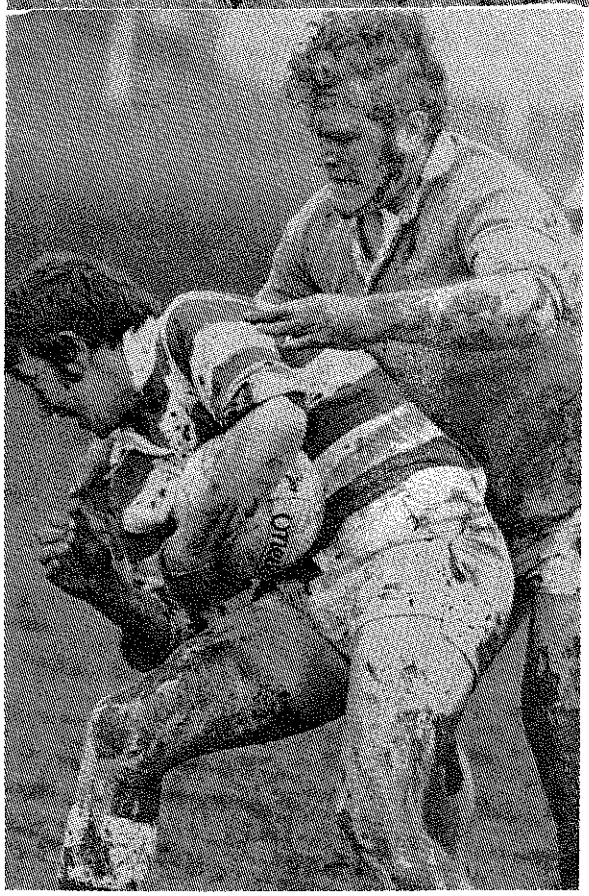
The Under-21 team swept Connacht agai . . . paradoxical really when they can por tray such skill in this competition and ye fail to shine when the players are put int senior competition.

They were beaten by Dublin in the Al Ireland semi-final at Castlebar, who were i turn beaten by Kerry in the final. The might have been expected to win that sem final and had the game been in Croke Par might have done so. Somehow these team nearly always manage to be better awa from home.

But no one is complaining about that d feat. We are confident about our superiori at this level in Connacht. Wish it could b so at senior level.



ABOVE—Garrymore Under-21 team, beaten in final by Charlestown.



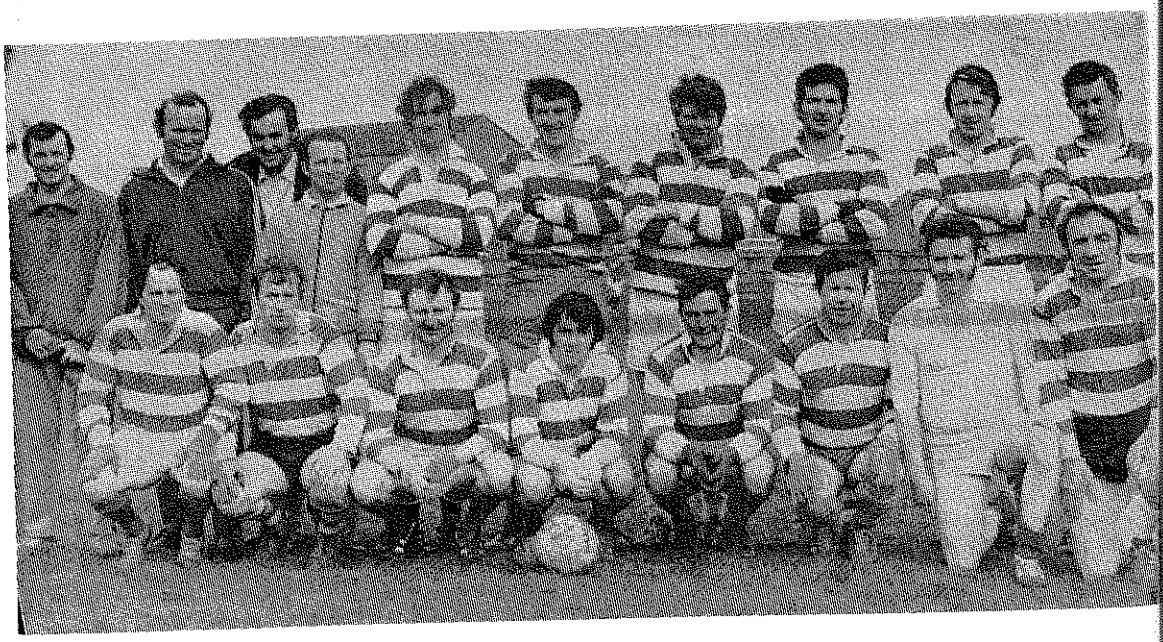
AT LEFT—Up to their eyes in mud—Pat Coyne (East) and Walter Corcoran (North) enjoy the action in the '74 Masters Final played last year.

THE MASTERS!



The East Mayo side, winners of the Over 30's competition (1974).

THE VANQUISHED!



—North Mayo.

ANOTHER TITLE!



ISLANDEADY—Intermediate champions last year, Junior champions in 1974.

STILL WAITING!



Mayo Senior footballers, beaten in the final by Sligo.

THEY DID IT AGAIN!



GARRYMORE—Mayo Senior Champions, 1975.

THE COUNTRY'S S



MAYO VOCATIONAL FOOTBALL TEAM, winners of the All-Ireland title. Back (left to right
morris), Eugene Lavin (Kiltimagh), Tommy Griffin (Claremorris), Eddie Conway (Achill), Pad
Griffin (Claremorris), Stephen Joyce (Ballinrobe), Patsy Walsh (Ballinrobe), Pat Dixon (Clare

IOOLBOY CHAMPS!



ıghney (Lacken), Joe Flynn (Castlebar), Gerry O'Mahoney (Ballina), Martin Coleman (Clare-(Westport). Front (left to right)—Pat Kilbane (Achill), Michael Collins (Lacken), Mickey ırles Collins (Lacken), Michael Biggins (Ballinrobe), Neal O'Donnell (Westport).

BEATEN AGAIN IN SENIOR FINAL!



AUGHAMORE—Garrymore's victims for the second year running.

CONNACHT CHAMPS!



Mayo's Under-21 footballers.

BACK WITH A BANG!



CROSSMOLINA—Mayo Junior football titleholders for the first time in thirteen years.

INTERMEDIATE RUNNERS-UP!



Ballinrobe beaten in the final.



ST. MUREDACH'S COLLEGE—winners of the Connacht Colleges juvenile football championship.

NEW TEAM MANAGER JOHNNY CAREY TALKS TO TOM COURELL

Q—Are you happy that you have sufficient powers?

A—Yes, I'm happy with the powers I've got.

Q—How do you see your role as Mayo's Manager?

A—I see myself co-ordinating and organising the efforts of all concerned with the selection and preparation of the team. When decisions are to be made, I will have the final word.

Q—What have been the problems over the past number of years. How do you hope to remedy the problems?

A—Our basic problem over the last few years has been that we have a young team and they have been developing gradually. I think that at the moment we have a stronger panel than a year ago. There are a number of positions on the team that we are not entirely happy with. To remedy this we have been trying different players. We've had a number of trial games on Saturdays and these have proved useful. I intend to continue this so that there will be a chance of new players emerging all the time.

Q—Mayo have often been accused of not having sufficient spirit. Would you accept that as a valid criticism?

A—Yes, this has been said. It may be true in isolated instances, but I don't accept the way this criticism is usually given. I think the present team are a very spirited bunch, and they shouldn't be loaded with our failures of the past. They must be given a chance to prove themselves in their own right. After all, most of them are playing in their first or second year with the senior team and it takes some players a couple of years to realise their full potential.

Q—It is now twenty-five years since Mayo won an All-Ireland. How much longer will it be before the next title comes?

A—I don't know. I wouldn't like to make any firm predictions. We have a pretty good panel of players at the moment but it takes a great deal of hard work and dedication to reach the top at senior level. I am confident that in the not too distant future we will win a senior All-Ireland, but I like to jump my fences as I come to them and my main priority at the moment is the Connacht championship.

Q—Can Mayo G.A.A. Board do more to get better results out of their senior team?

A—I think Mayo have an excellent County Board and are doing their utmost to have a successful senior team. The biggest single problem that we have in Mayo is that our players are generally scattered all over the country which makes it difficult to get them together for training.

Q—What would you like to see Mayo supporters doing to help their team achieve success?

A—I would like to see our supporters identify themselves more with the team, in defeat as well as in victory. Supporters tend to disassociate themselves from the team when they are defeated. A player needs to feel that he 'belongs' and has the support of all Mayo men in defeat as well as victory.

Q—It has often been a criticism of Mayo that their football is "too nice," that it lacks the toughness necessary in championship football. Would you agree?

A—I think the reason for this criticism is that we tend to pick too many lighter players who are usually better ball players. This problem starts at minor level where the football is not so physical and the problem does not highlight itself. It is only when you move to senior level that you notice it. I think that at senior level you need a certain number of strong players, provided, of course, that they have the necessary football ability, in order to achieve the right blend.

Q—Do you think the present club championship set-up is an assistance or a hinderance to producing top-class county footballers? Are there any changes you would like to see in the set-up?

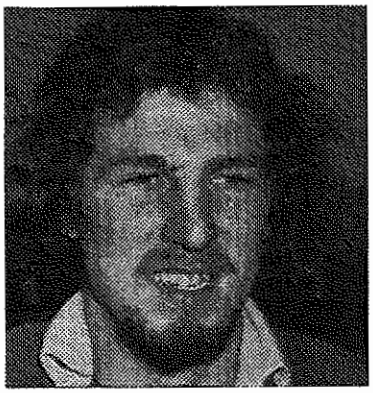
A—I think the present club championship is ideal. Club football has improved enormously over the last few years, but I feel that we can develop it further. I don't think that enough football is being played by our senior club players. The most number of games played by any senior club in the last year was 14 or 15, and this, I think, is not enough, even though it is a big improvement on former years. The players themselves appear to be happy enough with this situation. I think that if a player has the right approach and wants to be successful at football he should want to play football every Sunday. A great deal of the time spent in preparing the county senior team is in getting them physically fit. The clubs themselves or the Divisional Boards could help in this respect. In addition to the present senior championship and league, we could also have Divisional Senior Championships. For this I would allow every two (not more than two) junior clubs to amalgamate for the purpose. The clubs should also provide more football by organising challenge and tournament games. The ideal situation would be where we had senior club games on every Sunday in the year, irrespective of whether the senior county team is playing, with the exception of a close season which I would have in the winter months, i.e. January and December.

Q—What qualities do you look for most in a footballer?

A—The qualities that spring to mind are: ability, dedication, commitment and loyalty to team, willingness to learn and perfect the skills of the game; courage and pride in playing for Mayo.

Q—What are your views on the Open Draw as opposed to the provincial championships?

A—I think the Open Draw should be introduced but I also think that the Provincial Championships could be retained. I think the Open Draw is fairer and it would add a new dimension and glamour to the game. The Provincial Championships are inclined to be very repetitive with the same teams playing each other year after year. I think that with the Open Draw you would also have more 'open' football as teams would not be as familiar with each other's style of play. I also think that the National League should run concurrently with the Championship, starting in March and finishing in October. Sufficient Sundays could be left aside for club competitions, i.e. club championships, as I think club leagues should be played irrespective of whether the county are playing or not.



MICK HIGGINS

NO-NONSENSE MICK HIGGINS

HIS ORIGINAL selection was regarded as a kind of emergency measure. A stop-gap choice, the spoiler type, one you could employ successfully to eclipse an opponent by harassment rather than by football ability.

Today Mick Higgins is one of Mayo's most dependable defenders. Tough, determined, resilient, courageous, he embodies the very qualities which Mayo, as a whole, seems to lack.

Less refined than most and less talked about because, perhaps, being one from whom less was expected. Yet he has given more than those from whom more was expected, the young beauties of promise, full of wriggles and frills and feints, that fall in the close confines of tough man-to-man competition.

There is growing opinion in Mayo that the endemic polish-and-nothing-else player has not what it takes to be fully successful, that the courageous has the best chance of chiselling victory and is now becoming the more favoured son. It a player possesses the rare twin qualities so much the better.

Mick Higgins may not have the style that wrings oohs and aahs from football stands, but he possesses the bone-shaking equipment in his own make-up, the crunching tackles, the constant shadowing of an opponent and the lengthy powerful drives that have often pulled Mayo from the brink of defeat.

He was no late developer. At the age of fourteen he captained the Westport juvenile football and hurling teams which won the Mayo titles, his display in the football final was one of the best in the grade for years. That double, in fact, was a record in that it was the first achieved by any club in Mayo. It still stands.

He played minor football with Mayo at at age of sixteen, winning two league medals. He captained the minor championship team beaten by Galway in the Connacht final. He also won a West Mayo junior football medal with Westport as well as a county minor hurling medal.

He played under 21 and senior championship for Mayo in the one year, won two Connacht under 21 medals, a junior medal and a Connacht junior hurling medal.

This year he was the flame of action behind Westport's success in the senior league. In both the semi-final, against Ballaghaderreen, and in the final against Garrymore, he directed Westport's success with inspiring displays against awesome opponents.

His activities have not been confined to Gaelic football. On one occasion he won five athletic events in the same day from running to high jumping.

That short history of this 24-years-old Westport man's sports career speaks volumes for his commitment and dedication, and his achievements can hardly hide the long, lonely hours of rigid training and self discipline.

While it is in defensive qualities that Mick Higgins has been engaged in Mayo, it is probably in his scoring of dramatic points from the dead ball that he is most renowned.

Few will forget the points he scored against Derry in the league in Castlebar, the first from about 65 yards and the second and dramatic winning score from 55 yards, almost on the sideline.

And there was that glorious point he scored from fully 75 yards in the recent Connacht final against Sligo at Castlebar from a free.

These are some of the traits that have made Mick Higgins the tough, no-nonsense player that people have come to accept and the type on whom they are relying more and more on for the All-Ireland success that has eluded Mayo for so long.

THE UNSUNG SCHOOLBOY HEROES

by Patsy Noone

IN A YEAR which was not distinguished by major Mayo victories, it's refreshing to record that one team sporting red and green jerseys had its moments of glory on All-Ireland final day. I refer, of course, to the vocational schools team, the unsung heroes of Mayo football, for annexing their second All-Ireland title.

When one considers that prior to 1971 Mayo had failed to capture even one Connacht title, its record over the past five years is indeed a proud one: All-Ireland champions in '71; beaten finalists in '73; defeated in All-Ireland semi-final in '74, and once again bringing in '75 glory to the "Plain of the Yew Tree."

In the opening round in this year's Connacht championship Mayo were drawn at home against old rivals Leitrim at Crossmolina. Many football followers would consider this game a mere formality, but team mentors, mindful of Leitrim's shock victory in 1972, were taking nothing for granted. Following a number of trials it was evident that the nucleus of a good side was available.

This opinion was vindicated when the home side raced into an early lead despite facing a stiff breeze in the opening half and had built up a commanding interval lead of 2-4 to 0-4. Watching the combined plan of the forward sextet it was difficult to believe that was their first competitive game together. Brilliantly led by captain and full-forward Pat Dixon (Claremorris) with Ballinrobe's Patsy Walshe and Stephen Joyce and Francis Moran (Westport) playing able, supporting roles, Leitrim's defence was severely tested. Leitrim improved somewhat after the interval, but nevertheless Mayo were safely through to their Connacht final on a score of 4-11 to 0-5. Other players to catch the eye were Eugene Lavin (Kiltimagh), John Loughney (Lacken), Paraic Moran (Westport) and Martin Coleman (Claremorris).

And so to the Connacht final at Ballinrobe and a meeting with resurgent Galway, victors over Sligo after a replay. Could Mayo make it three Connacht titles in a row or would a youthful Galway side regain their former glory? Mayo suffered a serious blow with the departure from school of Westport's George Reilly and Francis Moran. Into the team came Castlebar's Joe Flynn, not yet 16 years, and Michael Biggins (Ballinrobe).

From the throw-in Mayo began to dictate matters at midfield, thanks to inspired display by Ballinrobe's Stephen Joyce, but an over-anxious forward line were guilty of inexcusable misses. At the short whistle they were not flattered to lead by 0-5 to 0-1. It was obvious that Mayo's physical advantage would prove too much for an inexperienced Galway side who none the less battled bravely to the end, losing by 2-10 to 0-2. Stars of that victory in addition to Joyce were Michael Collins (Lacken), Tommy Griffin (Claremorris) Michael Biggins (Ballinrobe) and Ned O'Donnell (Westport).

The next stage was an All-Ireland semi-final clash with the might of Kerry at Ennis one week later on April 20th. Mayo made the journey more in hope then confidence, as Kerry were backboned by six of the Tralee school's team that a week earlier had captured the individual schools' title. On a pitch that cut up badly after days of torrential rain Mayo began in an impressive fashion

and forged into an early lead with points from P. Walsh and P. Dixon. Gradually the pattern of the game changed and with Kerry's Tim Doyle lording it at midfield they jumped into an interval lead of 1-6 to 1-4. Doyle was later to figure on the Kerry under 21 team and is now on their senior panel. Mayo were forced to fight a rearguard battle but goalie E. Lavin, John Loughney (Lacken) and Tom Griffin were in superb form in the middle of the defence and helped by an opportunist goal from Joe Flynn, Mayo kept in the hunt. For sheer excitement and honest endeavour in deplorable conditions, the second half provided thrills aplenty as the play moved from end to end.

With five minutes remaining, Kerry still held a two points advantage, but with Doyle visibly tiring and Coleman's stamina beginning to tell, Mayo were exerting pressure on the Kerry defence. First Joyce from a free and then from play levelled the scoring. In one final, desperate attack, Mickey Griffin was fouled twenty five yards out and slightly to the right of the Kerry posts. The kick was entrusted to Pat Dixon. With unerring accuracy he slotted the kick between the posts. This was virtually the last kick of the game and Mayo were through to a Croke Park meeting with Tyrone. Spare a thought for unlucky Kerry who had given everything but were literally pipped on the post. At least that is one title they did not win in 1975.

With a five weeks break to All-Ireland final day, Mayo's panel underwent a vigorous training programme. A number of challenge games were arranged against the Mayo minors and this served as ideal preparations as the extra incentive of gaining a place on the minor side was also at stake in the challenge games. Those to later play for Mayo minors were Eugene Lavin, John Loughney, Paraic Moran, Michael Collins and Pat Dixon and Clonbur-born Stephen Joyce, who figured on the Galway side.

Tyrone's path to the final was an impressive one and when their outstanding midfielder Turnbull opted to assist the school's side at the expense of the 21 team, the press installed them as favourites. From the throw-in, both teams seemed to be affected by the occasion with the result that scoring chances went abegging. If anything, Mayo shaded the honours in the opening half, but on the scoreboard it was Mayo 1-4 to Tyrone's 0-7. Tom Griffin (Claremorris) was outstanding at centre half back in the opening half, as was ice-cool goalie Eugene Lavin, safe holding John Loughney and dependable Paraic Moran (Westport).

On the resumption, Mayo's superior fitness and skill began to have its affect. With Stephen Joyce giving a masterly exhibition at midfield, ably assisted by Martin Coleman, the forwards enjoyed a plentiful supply of the ball. Diminutive corner forward Patsy Walshe was given a roving commission and the attack really began to function and point followed p o i n t with Pat Dixon and Charlie Collins displaying uncanny accuracy. Joe Flynn, despite his tender years, Mickey Griffin and Michael Biggins took their scores in style. Tyrone became disorganised and with defenders Neal O'Donnell, Michael Collins and Pat Kilbane in fine form Mayo were safely on the road to All-Ireland honours, and in the end had 1-15 to 0-11 on the scoreboard. Subs. Gerry O'Mahoney and Eddie Convey also played their parts when introduced in the second half. To win an All-Ireland in any grade is a tremendous achievement, but when it's won by sheer football artistry then it's doubly rewarding to all concerned.

Here it is appropriate to pay tribute to team trainer Tommy O'Malley, the Mayo senior footballer, and his fellow selectors, and to all the teachers who made this victory possible by ensuring a good attendance at training during the arduous campaign, to the Co. Board officials for their co-operation and assistance at all times and finally, but not least, to the players on the panel for their dedication and discipline.

On the domestic scene, Claremorris captured their second senior title with a hard earned 3-5 to 1-3 win over Ballinrobe. The junior A title went to Achill by the narrowest of margins over Castlebar. Later, both winners failed to capture Connacht titles. Geesala made history by taking the junior B title at the expense of Charlestown. In juvenile, Lacken inflicted defeat on luckless Castlebar.

Finally, let us not forget the handball success of Achill's J. A. Cafferkey, S. J. Lavelle and Charlestown's Kevin Caffrey, who both captured All-Ireland doubles and singles titles respectively in the vocational sector.

Tom Rowley

GROWING INFLUENCE

SOUTH MAYO'S influence on football and hurling in the county continues to grow.

This year, not alone did clubs from the area contest virtually all county finals in the various grades, winning three, but players from these and other clubs helped to backbone Mayo's senior, Under-21 and minor sides.

While Garrymore continued to dominate senior football, romping with little difficulty to their second county title in a row, other clubs emerged from the South, giving football in the county a refreshing shot in the arm.

From Ballinrobe came an intermediate side full of flair; Hollymount spawned minor champions St. Gerard's, and Davitts, that spirited Irishtown club, matured to football manhood.

Hurling also brought prospects of a bright future with the emergence of a triumphant minor team from Ballinrobe, while the town's senior squad also fought gallantly in defeat.

It was a hectic year for Garrymore as the club continuously faced a loaded fixtures list. Early on they were ousted from the Connacht Club Championship by Roscommon Gaels in a clash which went to a replay.

Shortly after this they got back on the winning trail by handsomely defeating Milltown in the belated 1974 Exiles Cup final.

Happiest of the Garrymore men must have been centre half forward Mattie Walsh, who had missed the final the previous year because of a fractured leg. It was a great victory also for captain Danny Dolan, 31-years-old sharpshooter Billy Fitzpatrick, Harry Mannix, Willie Connolly, T. J. and Ger Farragher, Dominick Conway, Brian Healy and Patsy Mohan to mention but a few.

A side who could shortly replace Garrymore as the toast of South Mayo is Ballinrobe. Playing attractive, free-flowing football they cruised into an Intermediate championship semi-final slot where goals from Tommy O'Malley and Michael Flannery helped them trounce Bohola.

The final against Islandeady was definitely the most controversial fixture over the past year. Unsavoury incidents marred what had promised to be an exciting encounter. With the help of a 'gift' goal eight minutes from full time Islandeady took the title, but immediately Ballinrobe sought and were granted an inquiry into the incidents in the game. At time of writing the outcome of that inquiry has not been disclosed.

With players like the O'Malley brothers, Mayo senior team captain Tommy, his twin brother Padraic, and Ger, John Cosgrove, Michael Flannery, John Moran, Geoff Diskin, Michael Sweeney and Michael Biggins, Ballinrobe are primed to explode on the scene next year.

When Davitts defeated The Neale in the South Mayo junior final they made history. For it was the first title ever won by the Irishtown side. With tremendous displays from Louis Prendergast, M. J. McLoughlin, John Waldron, Brendan McGrath, Frank Fahy, Michael and Tommy Griffin and Joe Kirrane, they had matured into a team which played fast, precise football. In the county semi-final Crossmolina's experience and strength ousted them, but we certainly have not heard the last of Davitts.

The county minor hurling title also came South. Fine displays from Dominick Craddock, Ray McHugh, Michael Varley and Columbas Heneghan helped Ballinrobe overcome Castlebar in an exciting final.

Ballinrobe's senior hurlers again contested the county final but were defeated for the second successive year by Tooreen. Having their captain, Pat Malone, ordered off, knocked the bottom out of the Ballinrobe side, but they fought gallantly until the final whistle. The usual stalwarts—Bart Crowley, Paul McWalter, Willie Kelly, Michael Sweeney, Willie Loughnane and John Joe Morris formed the axis around which the team revolved.

CLAREMORRIS LADIES MAKE HISTORY!

A Message from Tommy Kenny, President, All-Ireland Ladies' Football Association.

"As one who has been connected with G.A.A. at club and county level, it is wonderful to see women taking an active part and playing Gaelic football. For too long their only role in the G.A.A. was to urge on their local and county heroes from stands and terraces around the country. While this was an admirable work, it is now time to let the men take over the terraces and support the ladies as vocally as they were and indeed still are.

"The game has spread to several other parts of the country with the standard of play improving. However, there is quite an amount of work to be done for ladies' football in general.

"Congratulations to Mayo under 16 ladies' footballers on reaching the first ever under 16 final. Best of luck on final day."

CLAREMORRIS ladies' football team captured the first ever county championship trophy by defeating their rivals, Ballintubber, 2-3 to 0-1. This victory capped a very successful year for this newly founded club who also succeeded in winning the prestigious Ballinasloe and Castlebar seven-a-side tournaments.

Claremorris were to start their campaign by playing Castlebar in the first round, but Castlebar were unable to field a team so Claremorris were awarded the points. In the second round they were drawn against Knockmore in Ballintubber, this game was far from exciting and inclined to be a little bit scrappy. Claremorris won 0-7 to 0-0. The next round saw them to the semi-final against Burrishoole. This was a clean sporting game, but Claremorris proved a handful for them winning by 7-0 to 0-1. Then came the final, Claremorris against Ballintubber, a team by whom they had been beaten twice previously in tournaments. Once again Ballintubber started favourites, but much to their surprise Claremorris had a little shock in store for them. Claremorris really put on the pressure from the start showing the flair that had brought them through the championship, giving a display of good, clean fast football. Ballintubber never really got a grip of the game, the score being Claremorris 2-3, Ballintubber 0-1. Nevertheless it was a tough match with some very good football.

Training commenced in April with two sessions a week, increasing to three at the close of the championship. These sessions consisted of coaching the various skills, physical fitness and teamwork. The utter dedication of the Claremorris ladies was a key factor in their win, not forgetting, of course, their trainers, Denis O'Boyle and Mr. John Kean, who continually put them through their paces.

Team panel was: D. Duggan (capt.), T. Higgins (vice-capt.), M. Cullinane, J. Kean, B. Murphy, B. Walshe, J. Gibney, M. Keane, D. McLoughlin, M. Mulroy, A. M. Whelan, M. Quinn, P. Shelly, A. O'Brien, M. McLoughlin, B. Kean, P. Jennings, M. Skelly, L. Bourke, P. Conroy, P. Costello, H. McDonnell, N. Duggan, M. Foster, M. McCartan, E. Killeen, M. Moran, B. Kelly, F. Higgins.

During the year a great bond of friendship has developed between the players. This alone, apart from the enjoyment, must justify the playing of ladies' football in the county. People have said that football is not a ladies' game, that there is too much physical contact. Yet over the championship we can't recall a single injury. Finally, in this the birth year of ladies' football, the Claremorris club would like to wish the Mayo Clubs and county every success in the future.

CHAMPIONS ONCE AGAIN!



TOOREEN—winners of the Mayo senior hurling title.

HURLING

THE TOOREEN SUCCESS STORY

HURLING IN TOOREEN has caught on in a big way and without doubt is going to last. It has now got the backing and involvement of the community.

At first when the Club was founded in 1957 local people were sceptical and a bit frightened at the sight of a hurley. They agreed it was our national game but they claimed it was not for the young lads of Tooreen. It was too dangerous and they didn't know how to play it.

How things have changed since then! This year, for instance, over 40 juveniles took part in a local league, and no injuries were reported. The young lads of to-day have a better chance of succeeding than we had in '57. It is now, as it were, handed down to them and they are being taught the skills by stars. Stars indeed we have aplenty on our senior team, but the brightest stars are from the Henry family.

Michael was founder of the club and played with the team 'til last year. Tony was picked for the Connacht team, the first Mayo man in decades to gain such an honour, and now Joseph seems about to outshine Tony. He was a sub. on the Connacht team this year and recently starred for the Physical Education College, Limerick, where he is a student.

We have many more of this calibre who each year form the backbone of our county team. This year we had eight pleyers on the county panel. They were three Henry brothers, Eamon Freeman, Michael Keane, Michael J. Robinson, George Lee, Michael Nolan. Another interesting fact about Tooreen is that they never fail to fulfil a fixture.

We find we haven't enough fixtures to fulfil and have arranged numerous challenge games with clubs from other counties. This may attribute to the fact that nearly all the players are from the area and hurling is their priority. Down the years we found it difficult to beat teams from say, Ballina, Westport or Claremorris, but they were only one-year teams, mainly due to the fact that the people who organised them were not natives and perhaps moved on. This in turn affects our county team. Now the strong hurling towns are Castlebar, Crossmolina and of course, Ballinrobe, where a big effort is being made to promote the game.

We started the '75 season as county champs, winners of the special three county league, and had reached the final of Connacht Inter-Club Championship. Although Ardrahan, Galway champs, beat us decisively we showed we had individual players who could hold their own against any team in the country.

As the season draws to a close we can't record as many successes apart from again winning the county championship.

As well as those on the county panel, others to play with us during the year were Autie Henry, Jackie Coyne, Seamus Freeman, Paddy Judge, Eamon Mulrenan, Michael Walsh, Pat Gawley, Peter Lynskey, Willie Stenson, Christy McCann, Fr. Terence Nolan, Raymond Alyward, Brendan Hoban, Oliver Bolton.

by Michael Nolan



BALLINROBE—beaten in final.

MORE ABOUT THE LADIES . . .

THE KNOCKMORE ladies' G.A.A. club was formed at a meeting in Rehins Social Centre on August 1st, 1975. Thirty interested ladies attended and a committee was selected:

Secretary, Mrs. Beatrice Timlin; Assistant Secretary, Miss Ann Corcoran; Chairman, Miss Breege Timlin; Treasurer, Miss Bernie Boland; P.R.O. Miss Geraldine Nealon. The following selectors/trainers were also picked: Mr. Noel Boland, Mr. Eddie Dowd and Mr. John Durkan.

LADIES' football started in Lahardane parish with a series of challenge games and a parish team was formed to play Castlebar in a return game. The winners were Lahardane.

The first get together to form a ladies' football club was in June, 1975. Committee elected as follows:

President, Fr. Canon Cafferkey; Chairman, Teresa McGowan; Vice-Chairman, Catherine Kelly; Secretary, Angela McManamon; Vice-Secretary, Ann Brogan; Treasurer, Agnes Brogan; Selectors, Tommy Walsh, Mrs. Coyne, Mrs. Gibbons.

BALLINTUBBER ladies' Gaelic football club was formed in May, 1975, and the following officers were elected:

Chairman, Mary Larkin; Assistant Chairman, Mary Bourke; Secretary, Cassie Heneghan; Assistant Secretary, Ann Bourke; Treasurer, Marian Hayes; P.R.O., Mona Horan; Trainers, Seamus Duffy and Eamon Chambers; Selectors, Paddy Jennings, Seamus Duffy and Eamon Chambers.

Well earned victories were recorded in tournaments organised during the summer months in Ballintubber, Newport and Claremorris. At county championship level, Ballintubber entered the final undefeated, they were, however, decisively beaten by Claremorris in a disappointing encounter.

Mayo senior team comprised of four club players, namely: Mary Larkin, Catherine Larkin, Ann Bourke, with Rosaleen Conway as captain.

Mayo U-16 team comprised of five of the clubs players, namely: Vera Dillon, Ann Chambers, Catherine Larkin, Breege McNally and Christina, vice-captain.

THE RISE OF ST. GERARDS

by Billy Horan



St. Gerard's Club, Hollymount, winners of the M yo Minor Football Championship. Back row, left to right—J. J. Trench, Chairman, S. Reilly, assista nt trainer, M. Joyce, J. Dixon, L. Duggan, T. Costello, D. Fitzpatrick, T. McHugh, L. Coen, E. Mack n, M. Finn, T. Moran, P.R.O. Front row—J. O'Boyle, D. Healy, J. Coen, P. Walsh (capt.), M. Conroy, F. Fahey, M. Costello, F. Noone.

ONE OF THE MOST significant happenings in G.A.A. affairs in South Mayo in 1975 was the breaking of the stranglehold exercised by Carras and St. Colman's, Claremorris, on football at the minor grade level. The agents were St. Gerard's, Hollymount, and, as if to confirm that their divisional displays were a true mirror of their capabilities, they proceeded to annex the county title.

The initial step on the road to success was taken at Kilmaine, where their opponents were St. Joseph's, an amalgamation of players from Shrule and Glencorrib. Although the winning margin was nine points, 2-12 to 1-6, the game was by no means a one-sided one, and Michael Costello, who scored 1-3, Declan Fitzpatrick and David Healy were particularly effective. Carras, the county champions for the past two years, provided the opposition in the semi-final and with both teams drawing the majority of their players from the same parish, it had all the trappings of a local "derby." Carras went ahead by three points in the opening minutes, but St. Gerard's, refusing to be ruffled, gradually assumed control and the ultimate scoreline of 2-14 to 1-4 was an adequate testimony to the challengers. Tom McHugh, at centre half back, Eugene Macken, John O'Boyle and Liam Duggan did most to effect the downfall of the title holders.

Ballinrobe defeated Claremorris in the other semi-final, but the advantage of a home venue was of no avail to them in the divisional final. St. Gerard's won by 1-13 to 1-2, and Patsy Walsh, the captain, and Frank Noone were the main scorers.

Knockmore, the North Mayo champions, were unable to cope with the fine attacking football of Gerard's in the county semi-final and were eliminated by 3-17 to 0-7. Fittingly, the toughest assignment of all was the county decider, and Charlestown, the East Mayo representatives, were in front at half time. The turning point came in the 48th minute when Patsy Walsh, receiving a pass from substitute Frank Fahey, goaled. St. Gerard's eventually won by 1-9 to 2-2 and apart from Patsy Walsh, John O'Boyle, Declan Fitzpatrick and substitute Martin Finn gave impressive performances.

No tribute to the team would be complete without a warm word of commendation to Ritchie Bell, the trainer, and Sean Reilly, his assistant.

ON A BLEAK Sunday afternoon in 1973 Mayo lost the U-21 football final to Kerry at Ennis. They had played so brilliantly for three-quarters of that game and had so completely dominated the opposition that many of the Kerry supporters had given up hope of winning. Mayo, however, sat back and took victory for granted, which as everyone knows doesn't respond to such treatment, and so the determined Kerrymen won the title. This year the corresponding Kerry team won the Sam Maguire cup in tremendous fashion, while what looked a Mayo team of all talents in 1973 at Ennis, and even more so last year when winning the U-21 title against Antrim, collapsed to a poor Sligo team in Connacht, who in turn were trounced by Kerry in the All-Ireland senior semi-final.

MAYO CAN COME OUT OF THE ASHES!

by John Greaney

Well! I can almost hear you ask—'what's he talking about.' I'm simply giving an example of two extremely opposite approaches to the wonderful game of Gaelic football. I write about Mayo because I support them, and because the majority of the readers of this book will be Mayo people. I mention Kerry because I regard it as the county which contributes most to football, works hardest to maintain the standard of the game, and last, but not least, I think that Kerry teams reflect all that is sporting and skillful in the game. You may argue that scoring statistics prove nothing especially when circumstances are so variable, but it is ridiculous that two teams of relatively equal potential should arrive at such totally contrasting desinations in as short a period as two years. Both counties drafted roughly the same number of U-21 players onto the senior ranks, and on both sides there are a few more experienced players to provide the necessary leadership for the younger 'blood,' but apparently the attitude to football is completely different in Kerry to that in Mayo.

I think it fair to suggest that Mayo supporters are the most loyal in the country. We haven't won an All-Ireland title since 1951, or a Connacht title since 1969, and yet each year when the championship dawns the supporters flock in thousands to the different venues. There have been so many times when Mayo teams have looked like going somewhere worthwhile but failed at the vital hurdle, so many disappointments, 'ifs' and 'buts' that I think the loyalty of the Mayo supporters has been tested to its limit. Questions must be asked and the bitter truth revealed. There can be no more excuses, everyone is tired of excuses!

The last time Mayo were worthily represented at senior championship level was when Flanagan's gallant men won the All-Ireland title for the two successive years 1950-51. That was when every supporter had occasion to be proud. Ever since then people all over the country have been wondering what has been happening football in Mayo. I have heard some keen football fans remark how strange it is that Mayo should continue to produce so many brilliant underage footballers who never seem to make it to

the top. Others have noticed the lack of urgency shown by Mayo teams in the championship despite their excellent league performance, while some experts maintain that there is a curse on Mayo football which follows them everywhere.

Personally I think that the team and mentors have come to accept defeat in the championship as an annual event. They know what a reputation they have built for themselves, and they are quite satisfied to accept the silly myth. Afterall, it's much easier to sit on a high stool and drink pints than to train enthusiastically for a championship game, especially when one knows that there would be more surprise at victory than defeat!

Kerry have a great tradition which they are proud to live up to. Every Kerryman loves the game and it is his dreaming ambition to one day play for the county at senior level. In Mayo, youngsters don't have the same incentive. I have heard friends of my own who have played on the county minors swear that they would never 'don' the senior jersey. There is something wrong when a youngster doesn't think it an honour to play for the county senior team. If this situation is allowed to continue then Mayo can forget the idea of ever winning another Connacht title, not to mention an All-Ireland. Even if the team that's selected were to give of its best in the championship, Mayo would have many more titles than they have. Until there is a greater all round effort on behalf of everyone concerned, Mayo will continue to be humiliated, and soon there will be few red and green colours to be seen on the terraces!

SICKLY STATE

I think the cards are on the table for those in charge of football in the county to take a serious look at themselves and the sickly state of football in Mayo. The time has come for Mayo to stop fooling themselves and their supporters. The myth, of course, or whatever it is that looms over the team must be shaken off, the inferiority complex must be trampled on. Mayo can, and must show the G.A.A. public that they are capable of winning an All-Ireland with the best. Success, however, doesn't come overnight like a mushroom, there must be a certain amount of work put into it.

Any team needs a proper manager as Dublin and Kerry so recently demonstrated. As I write John Carey has just taken over as manager of the Mayo team, and if he's as industrious as when he himself was a player then the team is in good hands. I would like to see John Morley playing an active part in the training and selection of the team. The big Ballaghaderreen man has got the character to install the vital discipline that has always been lacking in the Mayo training camp, and at the same time his playing experience would be invaluable.

What about the team? Firstly I am very much in favour of a rule where every county should field their strongest available team for league and championship games. In Mayo there have been some of the finest players lost through sheer carelessless — and some have justly declared for other counties. There should be a large number of players put on trial, and representatives from every club should be given a fair chance. If players were treated fairly I believe we would see the best of them on the field. The extensive trial system would make players fight harder for their places and this would eventually raise the overall standard of the game. The supporters would be less reluctant to travel to matches as they would have some chance of getting value for their money.

So I feel that it is time Mayo football was completely rejuvinated. String pulling and red tape must be replaced by a concrete approach and an interest in the game's welfare. Mayo must show all and sundry that they, like the Limerick hurlers and Cork footballers of 1973, can come out of the ashes to win an All-Ireland title. If they continue to hibernate they'll be the laughing stock of every G.A.A. fan's joke—God help us!

If they wake up now perhaps they could breath fresh championship air with a team like this:—

I. Heffernan; J. Culkin, E. Campbell; S. Reilly; G. Feeney, B. Diskin, M. Higgins; S. Kilbride. T. Webb; R. Bell, J. P. Kean, M. Burke; T. O'Malley, W. McGee, J. Burke.

P.S.—Hope to see you all in Castlebar next July!

Thomas Courell, 1886

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A Name Synonomous With The Stephenites

★

Gerald Courell, 1976

THE WELCOME DECISION of Gerald Courell, the former Ballina, Mayo and Connacht star, to stay on as President of Ballina Stephenites for the coming year means that the club will celebrate its 90th anniversary in 1976 with a Courell at the helm . . . just as it was in 1886 when Gerald's father, Thomas, was appointed the club's first President.

It is an unique link with the past and the days when James Wallace Melvin (well-known as Larry Doolin, the man who wrote the club's victory song) and his colleagues met in the open air just 90 years ago to form Ballina Stephenites.

Fittingly, there has always been a Courell involved in the administration of the club: the Courell name is synonymous with Ballina Stephenites. Thomas Courell's four sons all played with Ballina, starting off with burly Frank (D.F.) who was on that great team which won the Croke Cup from 1907 to 1909 inclusive. Indeed he had the distinction of leading the first Mayo team to enter an All-Ireland final when they were defeated by the all-conquering Wexford team in 1916. Frank's brothers, Bertie and Joe, were also accomplished footballers, but in 1924 there entered Mayo senior ranks one of the most famous figures ever to play inter-county football—the youngest member of the Courell family, Gerald.

When only a boy, just sixteen, Gerald's prowess created such a stir in Ballina that he went straight from the school team into the Stephenite's senior side. He was to go on to help the club win over half a dozen Mayo titles, assist in four of the county's record-breaking sequence of six league titles in a row, and he also played a major role in another history-making event, Connacht's first Railway Cup football success in 1934. He was, of course, on the panel when Mayo won the 1936 All-Ireland final and that All-Ireland medal assured him of every major honour the game could bestow.

TOURED AMERICA

In 1932 he was the only Mayo man picked to represent Ireland against America in the Tailteann Games at Croke Park and he toured the U.S. twice, in 1932 and 1937. He was christened the 'Babe Ruth' of Gaelic football by Irish-Americans in the States following a series of fantastic displays of accuracy. His inter-county career ended in 1937, thirteen years after it had commenced, and he had the honour to skipper the Mayo team for nine of those thirteen memorable years.

His connection with Gaelic football did not end when he finally hung up his boots in the forties at club level. He became secretary of the North Board, chairman and secretary of the Stephenites, and went on to hold the treasurership and secretaryship of the County Board. In the fifties he was elected chairman of the Connacht Council and during his reign the Railway Cup was won after a lapse of 13 years, two All-Ireland senior football, one All-Ireland junior football, and one All-Ireland minor football titles (all by Mayo) were brought West of the Shannon, in addition to one National League title (Galway).

He was, too, co-trainer of the Mayo team (with Jackie Carney) which won the All-Ireland senior titles in 1950 and 1951.

His proudest memory in 200-odd appearances for Mayo was in captaining the Mayo team to win their first major honours, the League of 1933-34 when Dublin were defeated by two points at Croke Park in a replay.

He told me recently: "I can still remember the cold feel of the Cup in my hands as I took it and the feeling it sent through me. It was the first time a Mayo captain had ever held the trophy in the history of the game; it was the first time the title came to Connacht and it brought Mayo out of the football wilderness on a record-breaking run of six National League titles in a row."

In recognition of these tremendous achievements, for his continued loyalty to Ballina Stephenites and for the experience he has handed on to successive officers of the club, Gerald was given a tremendous ovation at the A.G.M. of the club in November when he reversed an earlier decision not to seek re-election as President of the Club.

As one old member pointed out, the Stephenites would not be the same without a Courell! And the club's 90th anniversary will be all the more meaningful with him in the Presidency, for apart from giving a lifetime of service to the club he retains that almost awesome link with 1886 when it all began, for Ballina Stephenites at least!

Terry Reilly



BALLINA UNDER 14's.

CARROLLS ALL-STAR

THE STAR OF THE TOUR



AT THE AGE OF 22 I have been very fortunate to receive many honours in the G.A.A. One of my greatest honours was to receive a trip to San Francisco with the Carrolls G.A.A. All-Stars. The dream of playing alongside some of Ireland's greatest footballers had come true. When asked to give my views on the trip so many things come to my mind, the tours, sight-seeing, hospitality of the people, the games and also the friendship I made with some of the players.

The trip itself is a very exhausting one, as there are so many things to be done and so many sights to be seen. The beautiful city of San Francisco is built on hills surrounded by magnificent views. such as the San Francisco Bay, Golden Gate Bridge, and the Oakland Bay Bridge. Contributing to the individual character of the city are its fogs, cable cars, Fisherman's Wharf, Chinatown, fine restaurants, huge shopping centres and also its beautiful parks and lakes.

On our arrival we met up with our hosts, and these people put their time, cars and themselves at our disposal. I stayed with a Mayo family, the Moyletts from Castlebar: they treated me very well. Tom Moylett is one of the organisers of the tour out there. The first night on arrival the Connacht Club entertained the hurlers and footballers of Connacht, and each of us were presented with beautiful engraved plaques. Each night there were shows, dinners and dances where players got the chance to meet the Irish and the hosts of their team-mates.

On the final night in San Francisco there was a supper for the teams and the presentation of awards. It was a special night for me as I received the "Player Of The Tour" Award. The supper was held in the United Irish Cultural Centre, a beautiful centre that was built by voluntary labour by the Irish people.

We went down to Los Angeles for a few days; the city is in complete contrast to San Francisco. The country is very flat (it's almost impossible to find a hill) and the places of most interest are very far apart. It's a beautiful country with Disneyland getting most of the attention. I stayed with a Tyrone family of whom Frank McGuigan was also a guest. Frank and myself got on great together, we had a great time and did some very exciting things together. It was at the game in Los Angeles that I met up with one of Mayo's greatest footballers, Dr. Padraic Carney; he looks great and sends his regards to his many friends in Mayo.

On the way home we played in Gaelic Park, New York: the city is riddled with Mayo people. I have an uncle and an aunt there so I stayed with them. Gaelic Park presents the same atmosphere as Croke Park but its playing surface needs attending to.

And now to come to the football side of it. The games were very competitive and both teams gave a great exhibition of football. We beat the Dubs in the two games we wanted to win and they didn't like it one bit. The players on the All-Stars team played the same type of football so we had no difficulty in knitting into a good team. It's great to meet and play with those chaps and there is nothing better than a top-class sportsman. To mention a few—Billy Morgan, a great goalie and the inspiration he gives would bring out the best in any player; Johnny Hughes of Galway, what a great leader of a team he is; Frank McGuigan of Tyrone, the best fielder of a ball in the game and the greatest footballer I have ever played with or against; the great left-footed Peter McGinnity, and the flying Colm McAlarney of Down. The cleverness and pure football ability of Jimmy Barry-Murphy of Cork, and the delightful jinking solo runs of Johnny Tobin of Galway, are but some of the memories I had of the games. I admired Sean Purcell, our team manager, for the determination he put into the players; he's a really fine chap.

The highlights of the games for me was my duels with David Hickey of Dublin, surely the greatest half-forward in the game. The other Dublin players to impress me were Brian Mullins, Robbie Kelleher and Tony Hanahoe.

My visit to California is something I will treasure for a lifetime. All I can say is thanks to the people who made it possible; to my hosts; to my club and to my fellow county team-mates for their very generous collection. Well that's my account of one of the highlights of my career. I hope it has been interesting to all

Ger Feeney



ON THE BALL—Ger Feeney in full flight.

BELMULLET SECONDARY SCHOOL

100 BOYS ON THE ROLLS-

★

AND NOW ONE OF MAYO'S BEST FOOTBALL NURSERIES

★

Eamon Shevlin

The rise of Belmullet and Kiltane into Mayo senior football has rekindled enthusiasm for football far and wide throughout Erris, even in the areas where the flame of fervour for the native games seemed to have flickered and died. That resurgence was shown by the rise of the local Secondary School in colleges' senior football. The school captured two Connacht titles this year in C Division. Their's was a great achievement for a school which has only 100 day pupils—boys—on rolls and only very limited training facilities compared to other schools in the county. They entered their first team in the Connacht championship six years ago. Their careful coaching by the trainer, Rev. Fr. Liam Killeen, succeeded in making a big impression in Connacht senior and junior championships. The school can boast in producing footballers who donned the green and red of Mayo with distinction in minor grade: Donal Barrett, Padraig O'Toole, Eamon Goonan, John Munnelly, the Cosgrove brothers from Bangor. Richard played for the Mayo under 21 team and Billy McManamon.



Belmullet School Senior team, winners Conacht Colleges "C" Championship.

While the basic objective is to have as many as possible in the school playing the game, success is an important bonus. It has been coming to the Belmullet school all the way through the hard work of the school trainer and sole selector, Rev. Fr. Liam Killeen, and the dedication and spirit of the boys. Their ultimate ambition is to develop the school playing pitch. The other ambition of the school is to see some of their young players win their way into the green and red jerseys of their county. Three of this year's team, Eamon Goonan, John Munnelly and the babe of them all, 16 year old Willie Joe Padden, were members of this year's Mayo minor panel. John Munnelly played against Roscommon in the first round and covered himself with glory with a fine display.

On the school's way to the final, on a cold October day, they beat Ballinfad by 5-11 to 4-3, and from that win they gained confidence that saw them hand out a real "hiding" to Louisburgh by 2-10 to 4 points. At the end of October at Crossmolina they were reeled back on their heels with a shock defeat by Crossmolina by 2-13 to 2-10. They trained hard for a replay. After beating Enniscrone they took on the Deel Rover Boys at Newport, where they outplayed Crossmolina by 10 points.

All were set now for the semi-final stages where they prepared hard for their match against Ballyhaunis. They were worthy winners to qualify for their first ever final. On a sunny afternoon at McHale Park, Castlebar, they faced their big challenge of the season when they took on Galway champions, Oughterard, in the final. Backed by home support they faced their opponents with all the confidence of their previous matches and collected their first senior trophy. What a rousing reception they got from their school

supporters who travelled by special coaches to watch them defeat Oughterard by 2-12 to 1-7. The big names of the win were the capt. Vincent Noone, who inspired his team mates from the word "go;" the high-fielding Sweeney brothers, Gerard and Johnny, the intellignet play of Willie Joe Redden at mid-field, up front, Padraig Barrett, John Munnelly and Tom Ruddy were always hungry for scores and the tall, cool under-pressure Eamon Goonan was the rock which the Oughterard forwards could never crack. He was ably assisted by Hugh Cormack and Eddie Geraghty, Frank Conroy and Tom Reilly.

The junior team captured the schools' second title with a easy win over Mountbellow by 2-8 to 1-5, after they defeated Ballyhaunis in the semi-final. The big guns in the defeat of Ballyhaunis and Mountbellow were Francis Conroy, Tom Reilly and Tom Ruddy.

It was a truly great achievement for the Belmullet school to have captured two Connacht titles in 1975, and they have a very bright future ahead with up and coming youngsters in Eddie Geraghty, Michael Lavelle, Eamon McAndrew, Seamus Nallen, Paddy Joe McAndrew, Ballycroy boys Eamon Finn and Michael Conway, up-holding the future of the school. At a function held in the school following their victory, the Kilcoyne trophy was presented to the winning captain, Vincent Noone, by the President of the Belmullet Club, Rev. John Mulhern, who praised the team and trainer for the honour they brought to Erris and the school. This year a valuable trophy will be presented to the footballer of the year in the school. The school can look back on 1975, a record-breaking year, and the names of trainer Liam Killeen, players like W. J. Padden, Tom Reilly, Eamon Goonan, Hugh Cormack, Tom Reilly, Francis Conroy, John Munnelly, will always be remembered at the local Secondary School for what they have given to the G.A.A.



Belmullet School Junior Team.

CLUB AFFAIRS-1975

We wish to thank the various club officials who responded to our request for details of their club's activities in 1975.

MAYO COUNTY G.A.A. BOARD OFFICERS, 1975

President—Paddy Moclair.
Vice-Presidents—Michael O'Connell (E); Very Rev. Canon P. W. Davis, P.P. (N); Jim Mannion (S); Padraig Seoighe (W).
Chairman—Rev. Leo Morahan.
Vice-Chairmen—Michael Higgins (E); Dr. Michael Loftus (N); Sean Fitzpatrick (S); Tommy Lyons (W).
Secretary—Johnny Mulvey.
Assistant Secretary and P.R.O.—Christy Loftus.
Treasurer—Paddy Basquil.
Co. Registrar—John Creighton.
Co. Youth Officer—Henry Gavin.

MEMBERS

(5 members per division, one of whom must be under 21 years of age).
East—Bernie O'Hara, Tom Freeman, John Bollingbrook, Frank Dillon, Martin Kilgallon.
North—Rev. G. Gillespie, Des Farrell, Terry Reilly, John Kenny, James Cosgrove.
South—Brian Healy, P. J. McGrath, Colm Mellette, Pat Lynn, Michael McDonnell.
West—Dick Conaiboy, Gerry Henry, Henry Gavin, Denis Carroll, Fintan Pepper.
Minor Board Chairman—Paddy Waldron.
Under 21 Board Chairman—George Armstrong.

SUB COMMITTEES OF THE COUNTY BOARD

Hurling Board—Chairman, Bart Crowley; Secretary, Nick Fitzsimmons; Members, Michael Nolan, Eamon Freeman, Sean Keary.
Minor Football Board—Chairman, Paddy Waldron; Secretary, Sean Reilly. Members: (E) John Lenehan, Eamon Burke; (N) Rev. Gerry Gillespie, Sean Mac Eil; (S) Austin Garvin, Fr. P. Callinan; (W) Paddy Muldoon, Pat Kilbane.
Under 21 Football Board—Chairman, George Armstrong; Secretary, John Kenny. Members: (E) Jimmy Duffy, Willie Cribben; (N) P. J. Loftus; (S) Frank Mulloy, Christy O'Haire; (W) Mick Devanney, Tom Moylett.
Under 21 trainer—Pat Staunton.
Activities Committee—Chairman, Tommy Lyons; Secretary, Christy Loftus. Members: (E) John Creighton, Frank Dillon; (S) Declan Heaney, Sean Murphy; (W) The Chairman and Secretary; (N) Liam Carey, Terry Reilly.
Appeals Committee—Chairman, Rev. Leo Moralhan; Secretary, Johnny Mulvey. Members: (E) Tom McNicholas; (N) Robert Triggs; (S) Bertie McHugh; (W) Tommy Lyons.
Disciplinary Committee—Chairman, Fr. Morahan; Secretary, Johnny Mulvey. Members: (E) Michael Higgins; (S) T. J. Farragher; (W) Tommy Lyons; (N) Liam Carey.
Finance Committee—Chairman, Fr. Morahan; Secretary, Johnny Mulvey; Treasurer, Paddy Basquil. Members: (E) Bernie O'Hara; (N) Robert Triggs; (S) Bertie McHugh; (W) Tommy Lyons.
Grounds Committee — Chairman, Dr. Michael Loftus; Secretary, Johnny Biesty. Members: (E) Bobbie O'Connell; (N) Liam Carey; (S) Tony Jennings; (W) Tony O'Toole.
Scor Committee—Chairman, Gerry Henry; Secretary, Robert Triggs. Members: Martin Conlon Jimmy Duffy, Billy Horan, Frank Mulloy, Fintan Pepper.
County Senior Football Selectors—Team Manager, Johnny Carey. Selectors, Frank McNicholas, John Kenny, Seamus Gallagher, Paddy Muldoon.
Captains—Mayo Senior Team Captain, Tom O'Malley; Under 21 Captain, Richie Bell; Minor Captain, Tommy Kearney.

DIVISIONS

EAST MAYO G.A.A. BOARD, 1975—President, Michael O'Connell; Vice-President, Ernie Salmon; Chairman, Michael Higgins; Vice-Chairman, Johnny Biesty; Secretary, Bernie O'Hara; Treasurer and Registrar, Tom McNicholas.
Divisional winners, 1975—Junior championship: Winner, Charlestown; runner-up, Kiltimagh. Under 21 championship: Winner, Charlestown; runner-up, Kiltimagh. Minor championship: Winner, Charlestown; runner-up, Aughamore. Juvenile championship: Winner, Aughamore; runner-up, Charlestown. Under 14 championship: Winner, Aughamore; runner-up, Charlestown. Primary Schools' championship: Winner, Swinford; runner-up, Kiltimagh. Canon Henry Cup: Winner, Kiltimagh; runner-up, Charlestown.

CLUBS

AUGHAMORE—President, Seamus Robinson; Chairman and P.R.O., Jimmy Duffy; Vice-Chairman, Tony Bolton; Secretary, Gerry Groarke; Treasurer, Pat Glavey; Registrar, Seamus Cox.
County Titles—Under 14: 1973, 1974. Minor: 1966. Junior: 1969. Intermediate: 1970.

BALLAGHADERREEN—President, Fr. Lafferty; Chairman, Fr. John Doherty; Secretary, John Mahony; Treasurer, Christy Greaney; Registrar, Joe Dillon.
County Titles—Minor: 1949, 1968. Junior: 1941, 1968. Senior: 1972.

BALLYHAUNIS—President, Paddy Waldron; Chairman, John Biesty; Vice-Chairman, Paddy Moran; Secretary, Michael Murrin; Assistant Secretary, Dermot Eagney; Treasurer, Frank Dillon; P.R.O., Michael O'Connell.
County Titles—Minor: 1952. Junior: 1957. Intermediate: 1968. Senior: 1958.

ANNAGH (E.M.C.)—President, Paddy Ryan; Chairman, Eamon Burke; Vice-Chairman, John Biesty; Secretary, Michael Murrin.

BOHOLA—President, Fr. Martin McManus; Chairman, Cathal Hennelly; Vice-Chairman and P.R.O., Fr. Kilcoyne; Secretary, Joe McEvoy; Treasurer, Willie Mallee; Registrar, Sean Mullarkey.

CHARLESTOWN SARSFIELDS—President, Canon Gallagher; Chairman, Aiden Henry; Vice-Chairman, Robert O'Connell; Secretary, Pat Walsh; Treasurer, Martin Horkan; Registrar and P.R.O., Ernie Salmon.
County Titles—Under 16: 1974. Minor: 1953. Under 21: 1975. Junior: 1933, 1938, 1951, 1953, 1963.

SONNAGH (E.M.C.)—President, Brian Moran; Chairman, Andrew Walsh; Secretary, Ernie Salmon; Treasurer, Robert O'Connell; Registrar, Ernie Salmon; P.R.O., Aiden Henry.

FOXFORD—President, Peter Tolan; Chairman, Tom Joyce; Vice-Chairman, Jim McDonnell; Registrar and P.R.O., Michael Staunton; Treasurer, Padraig Giannon.
County Titles—Minor: 1946.

KILTIMAGH—President, Michael Carney; Chairman, Michael Higgins; Vice-Chairman, Larry McBlin; Joint Secretaries, Tom Higgins, Johnny Lydon; Treasurer, Thomas McNicholas; Registrar, Michael Higgins; P.R.O., Tom Higgins.
County Titles—Junior: 1936, 1939, 1967. Minor: 1971. Juvenile: 1968, 1969, 1970. Under 21: 1970.

CILL AODAIN (E.M.C.)—Chairman, John Ronane; Secretary, John Carroll; Treasurer, Jim Higgins.

SWINFORD—Patron, Monsignor Colleran; President, Bernie O'Hara; Chairman, John Bollingbrook; Vice-Chairman, Joe Murray; Secretary and P.R.O., Luke O'Malley. Finance Committee: Martin Sheerin, Jack Pidgeon, Owen Roe O'Neill.
County Titles—Minor: 1951. Junior: 1954.

KILLASSER won a county minor title in 1937 and a junior title in 1935. The parish now plays with Swinford.

TOOREEN HURLING CLUB—Chairman, Autie Henry; Vice-Chairman, Eamon Freeman; Secretary, Michael Nolan; Treasurer and Registrar, Austin Henry; P.R.O., Tony Henry.
County Titles—Juvenile: 1, 1960. Minor: 1, 1973. Senior: 4, 1966, 1972, 1974, 1975.

NORTH MAYO BOARD—President, Canon P. W. Davis; Vice-Presidents, P. Flynn, B. Coyne, Fr. Mulhern, Fr. V. Moore, Fr. O'Hora, S. Hackett and W. O'Donnell; Chairman, Dr. Michael Loftus; Vice-Chairmen, T. McNeely, Tiernan Reilly, S. Cagney, P. Lavelle, Terry Reilly, S. Duffy and J. J. Barrett. Secretary, Liam Carey; Treasurer, W. McCaffrey.

Divisional winners, 1975—Junior championship: Winner, Crossmolina; runner-up, Bonniconlon. Under 21 championship: Winner, Knockmore; runner-up, Bonniconlon. Minor championship: Winner, Knockmore; runner-up, Kiltane. Juvenile championship: Winner, Nephin Gaels; runner-up, Round Towers. Under 14 championship: Winner, Ballina; runner-up, Crossmolina.

ARDNAREE—President, Walter O'Donnell; Chairman, Mickey Lynn; Vice-Chairmen, George Armstrong and P. J. Gilmartin; Secretary, Gerry Connor; Treasurer, Bernie Gallagher.
Titles—Junior: 1952, 1959.

BALLINA STEPHENITES—President, Gerald Courell; Chairman, Terry Reilly; Vice-Chairman, Sean Healy; Secretary, Stanley Rowe; Treasurer, P. J. Gillespie; Registrar, Bro. Nicholas.
County Titles—Under 14: 1975. Senior: 1904 to 1916, 1918, 1920, 1924 to 1929, 1933, 1935, 1938, 1940, 1943, 1947, 1955, 1966, total 29. Junior: 1931. Minor: 1935, 1936, 1938, 1945, 1948, 1950, 1958, 1960, 1967.

BELMULLET—President, Fr. Sean Mulhern; Chairman, Paddy Lavelle; Registrar and Secretary, Eddie Cuffe; Treasurers, Eddie Divens and Noel Reilly; P.R.O., Eamon Sheridin.
County Titles—Junior: 1943, 1944, 1973. Intermediate: 1974. Minor: 1956, 1962.

CROSSMOLINA—Patron, Dean B. McLoughlin; President, Tiernan Reilly; Vice-Presidents, Joseph Munnelly, Fr. Lavin, John O'Malley; Chairman, Dr. Michael Loftus; Vice-Chairmen, Sergt. Pat Sharkey, William Loftus; Secretary, Margaret Ann Brogan; Assistant Secretary, Paddy Cawley; Treasurer, Robert Marsh; Assistant Treasurer and Registrar, Cyril Clinton; Trainer, Frank Costello. Bord na n-Og—Chairman, Fr. B. Holban; Secretary, Cyril Clinton.
County Titles—Senior: 1949. Junior: 1928, 1947, 1955, 1962, 1975.

CROSSMOLINA HURLING CLUB—Chairman, Sean Keany; Secretary, Joe Lyons; Treasurer, Jim Ryan.

BONNICONLON—President, Canon James Henry; Vice-President, John Neary; Chairman, Frank Mullen; Secretary, Donal Tuohy; Treasurer, Dinny Langan; Team Manager, Jimmy Foody.

BALLYCASTLE—President, Sergeant Collins; Chairman, John Walsh; Vice-Chairman, Michael Forde; Secretary, Aidan Tighe; Treasurer, Brian Golden.
County Titles—Senior: 1936, 1937.

LAHARDANE MacHALES—President, Canon McCaffrey; Chairman, Stephen Cagney; Vice-Chairman, Brendan Coyne; Registrar, Sec. and P.R.O., P. J. Loftus; Treasurer, Sergeant James Friel.

NEPHIN GAELS (E.M.C.)—

KILLALA—President, John Kinhart; Chairman, Fr. Sean Heverin; Secretary, Michael McAndrew; Treasurer, Tony McAndrew.

LACKEN—President, Patrick Collins; Chairman, Martin Forde; Vice-Chairman, Michael Fitzmaurice; Secretary, John Cosgrove; Treasurer, Brian Forde.
County Title—Senior: 1917.

KILCOMMON—Chairman, Fr. Brian Conlon, C.C.; Secretary, Michael Carolan; Treasurers, Seamus De Burca, Seamus McGrath.

KILTANE—President, Canon Barrett; Chairman, Paddy Cosgrove; Vice-Chairman, Michael Golden; Secretary and Treasurer, Robert Triggs; Registrar, Liam Carey; P.R.O., Fr. O'Hora.
County Titles—Junior: 1972. Intermediate: 1973.

KNOCKMORE—President, Fr. Sean Durkan; Chairman, Des Farrell; Vice-Chairman, Jack McNeelly; Secretary and Registrar, Sean MacHale; Treasurer, John McNeelly.
County Titles—Intermediate: 1972. Senior: 1973.

SOUTH MAYO BOARD—President, Jim Mannion; Vice-Presidents, Seamus O'Malley, Frank Brennan and John Healy; Chairman, Sean Fitzpatrick; Vice-Chairman, P. J. McGrath; Secretary, Sean Murphy; Treasurer, John Muldoon; Registrar, Jackie Duggan.
Divisional Winners, 1975: Junior Championship: winners, Davitts; runners-up, Neale. Under 21 Championship: winners, Garrymore; runners-up, Claremorris. Minor Championship: winners, St. Geralds; runners-up, Ballinrobe. Juvenile: winners, Claremorris; runners-up, Kilmaine. Under 14 Championship: winners, Ballinrobe; runners-up, Neale. Primary School: winners, Claremorris; runners-up, Ballinrobe.

BALLINROBE, Football—Patron, Rt. Rev. Mons. Mitchell; President, Rev. A. O'Toole; Chairman, Michael Mulvey; Vice-Chairman, M. Coyne; Secretary, Marian Treacy; Assistant Secretary, T. Jennings; Treasurer, C. O'Haire; Assistant Treasurer, M. Conway.
County Titles—Minor, 1961; Junior, 1958.

BALLINROBE, Hurling—Chairman, Pat Malone; Secretary, Willie Loughnane; Treasurer, Christy O'Loughlin; Trainer, Brother Bannon.

CLAREMORRIS—President, Dr. John McHugh; Chairman, Cormac Hanley; Vice-Chairman, Sean Fitzpatrick; Secretary & Registrar, Jackie Duggan; Treasurer, Henry Cleary; P.R.O., Seamus Gallagher.

GARRYMORE—President, Jim Mannion; Chairman, Jim Nally; Vice-Chairmen, Declan Heaney and Tony O'Toole; Secretary & Registrar, Danny Dolan; Treasurer, Brendan Conroy; P.R.O., Bertie McHugh.
County Titles—U-14, 1971; Minor, 1956, 1959, 1973 & 1974; Junior, 1961; Intermediate, 1965, 1969; Senior, 1974, 1975.

CARRAS (EMC)—Chairman, Bertie McHugh; Secretary Tom McHugh.

DAVITTS (Irishtown)—Chairman, Malachy (Robin) Keane; Registrar & Secretary, Ausin O'Donnell; Treasurer, Francis McGrath.

GLENCORRIB—President, Joe Geraghty; Chairman, Fr. Cullinan; Vice-Chairman, John Mulloy; Treasurer, Secretary and P.R.O., Tom Mohan; Registrar, Paddy Sullivan.

KILMAINE—Patron, Canon McEvilly; President, Fr. Rushe; Chairman, Tom Doherty; Vice-Chairman, Bill Loughlin; Secretary, Michael Burke; Treasurer, Michael Murphy; Registrar, Michael Donnellon; P.R.O., P. J. McGrath.
County Titles—Minor, 1938; Intermediate, 1968.

NEALE—President, Joe Mellotte; Chairman, Fr. Brendan Cavanagh; Vice-Chairman, John McGrath; Secretary, Larry O'Dea; Treasurer, Sergt. T. Curley; Registrar, Tom McGovern; P.R.O., Michael Keane.

ST. GERARDS—President, Fr. J. J. Cribben; Chairman, Paddy Sheridan; Secretary, Richard Bell; Treasurer, John Walsh; P.R.O., Tom Moran.
County Titles—Minor, 1975.

ST. COMANS, Hollymount—Presidents, Paddy Reilly, Peter McHugh and John Healy; Chairman, J. J. Trench; Vice-Chairmen, Sean Reilly and Denis Murphy; Secretary, Michael Sheridan; Treasurer, Johnny Walsh; P.R.O., Tom Moran.
County Titles—Junior, 1956, 1964.

BURRISHOOLE—President, Rev. Fr. McEllin; Chairman, Christy Loftus; Vice-Chairman, Seamus Kelly; Secretary, Francis Daly; Treasurer, Paddy Monaghan; Registrar, Peter Bourke; P.R.O., Christy Loftus. Committee: Hugh Cannon, John Nolan, Martin and Michael Hughes, Peter Moran, Michael Costello.
Projects: Paying off debt incurred in building of dressing rooms.

BREAFFY—President, Johnny Lyons; Chairman, Tommy Lyons; Secretary, John Caulfield; Treasurer, Tommy Basquill; Registrar, J. Caulfield; P.R.O., J. Caulfield. Committee: John Kennelly, Luke Walsh, Tom Walsh, Padraic Walsh, Michael Caulfield, Noel Burke, John Mulcahy.
Projects: Purchase of club grounds at Breaffy; running of monthly Community Socials; running of a tournament during summer season.
County Titles—County Junior final, 1966.

WESTPORT—President, Rev. John Cosgrave; Chairman, P. J. Muldoon; Vice-Chairman, Johnny Groden; Secretary, Aidan Walsh; Treasurer, Denis Carroll. Committee: Chris Grady, Tom Navin, John Reynolds, Peter Reynolds, John Groden, Eamon Ketterick, Padraig Cunningham, Michael Grady.
Projects: Clearing of club debt.
County Titles—Senior League, 1975; Junior, 1970, 1941; U-16, 1973, 1971, 1970, 1966; U-14, 1970, 1968.

PARKE—President, Fr. M. Jennings, P.P.; Chairman, Michael Connor; Vice-Chairman, Tom Lawless; Secretary, Michael Kearns; Treasurer, Gerry Carney; Registrar, Michael Connor; P.R.O., Tom Rowley. Committee: Ml. O'Boyle, G. Carney, W. Murphy, T. Lawless, F. McHale, P. Jennings, Ml. Kearns, Fr. Quinn, C.C., Ml. Connor, T. O'Boyle, C. Moran.
Projects: Fund raising for the purchase of complete new attire, rented new pitch with the intention of obtaining it on permanent basis for complete development.

ISLANDEADY—President, Rev. P. Greally, C.C.; Chairman, John (Sonny) Rice; Vice-Chairman, Liam Sadler; Secretary, Enda Kenny, T.D.; Treasurer, Sean Moylett; Registrar, Tommie O'Brien; P.R.O., Enda Kenny. Committee: Peter Collins, T. Fitzgerald, Joe Moylett, Jackie Diffley, Tommie Moylett, Michael Collins.
Projects: Planning permission has now been obtained to commence work on Community Centre, including dressing rooms.
Titles—Won Co. Intermediate title, 1975.

ACHILL—President, Very Rev. Canon J. A. Colleran, P.P.; Chairman, Padraig Seoighthe; Vice-Chairman, Rev. J. Fallon, C.C.; Secretary, Patrick J. Kilbane; Treasurer, Joe Healy; P.R.O., John J. McNamara. Committee. Thomas Johnstone, Patrick McFadden, Frank Murtagh, Seamus Murray, Brendan Murray, Patrick McGinty, Michael Kilbane, Sean Gavin, John C. Gallagher, Michael T. Gallagher.
Projects: Extending, levelling, draining of club playing field to have a playing area of 140 yards by 86 yards. Proposed official opening, May, 1976.

NORTH MAYO

A GOOD YEAR WITH THREE COUNTY TITLES

says Terry Reilly

THE YEAR 1975 wasn't a bad one for North Mayo . . . in fact it was quite good, with three county titles coming to the Division.

Pride of place, of course, goes to Crossmolina who bridged a thirteen years gap by recapturing the Divisional and County Junior Crown, bringing vindication for a lot of hard work in developing St. Tiernan's Park and pressing on with the game in lean times.

Corner forward Christy Commons was the man privileged to lead a fine side which gave everything when it mattered most, in the divisional final against Bonniconlon, and in the county final against fancied Ballintubber. Much of the honours must go to team manager Frank Costello, the former Mayo stalwart, who brought his team to the peak at the right time.

Crossmolina shared, too, in the Mayo Masters (Over 30's) football championship success. Amalgamated with Knockmore and Lahardane, Crossmolina players were in the majority in the side and wasn't it fitting that Dr. Mickey Loftus should be on the side? The competition was his brainchild and he played no little part in poaching scores, especially in the North Mayo final against a strong Ballina/Ardnaree/Bonniconlon combination.

A hat-trick of championship succeses was achieved when the Crossmolina U-16 team won the North Mayo final in impressive style.

The honours went around fairly well. Ballina won the county Under 14 title under the captaincy of Nial Heffernan, brother of county goalkeeper Ivan, and that fine team must form the basis of a bright future for Ballina Stephenites.

Knockmore won the divisional minor and Under 21 titles to atone for their senior championship set-back, while the Erris clubs —Kiltane and Belmullet—reached the senior league and senior championship semi-finals respectively. Lahardane won the North Mayo junior league title.

The year saw the emergence, too, of Bonniconlon as a major force. Their fine young junior team pushed Crossmolina to the limit and served notice that 1976 could be their year. Remember, it was in 1956 that the club won their last North Mayo junior title!

At the end of the year Ardnaree Sarsfields announced their intention of stepping back to junior status and their presence is bound to put the cat among the pigeons.

Yes, 1976 is already shaping up as an extremely interesting year!

A CHAMPION TWELVE TIMES OVER

THE YEAR 1975 may be described as an uneventful year for Mayo sport in general, but the usual expected All-Ireland title came in through Peter McGee from Newport, who again won the senior hardball singles title, making it a record four times in a row.

Some people may say that he is like the proverbial river that goes on for ever, as he is now playing for the county for the 16th season and showing no signs of slowing up.

Starting in the minor grade in 1960, and although not winning an All-Ireland at this grade, at the age of 19 he won a Junior Doubles Softball title in 1962, being partnered by Mick Walsh from Charlestown. The most novel feature of this partnership was the age difference of 20 years between the Mayo players.

These same players had the pleasure of winning a senior softball doubles title at the old alley in Croke Park in 1966. This again represented another record as this was the first time that this title came to Mayo. Speaking of new achievemens, the following can be put on record concerning Peter. He was the first Connacht player to win either a senior hardball singles and doubles titles; to win three hardball doubles in a row, and to win six hardball singles titles.

Most of these achievements have gone unnoticed by the populace as handball does not command the same popularity as, say Gaelic football, in this county. However, with the advent of handball on television and the building of new courts things have improved considerably in this respect.

Peter McGee talks to Tom Courell

The question always arises as to what makes one individual player stand out in any sport. When asked to comment on this Peter says: "It is something one is born with as no amount of practice or dedication will make a player All-Ireland class if he has not got the natural ability. He can improve his game to his own satisfaction and enjoy it but unfortunately not everyone can gain top class honours.

"Coupled to this natural ability one must have an abundance of guts: by this I mean the will to win—the ability to come up off the floor when almost down and out. I have met some beautiful stylists in my time but lacking the killer instinct or guts to go the whole way.

"I think that is what is wrong with a lot of sportsmen, including the Mayo footballers —the will to win and the guts to dig in when everything seems lost. The physical demands in this game of handball are far greater than in most other sports.

"How many men can say that they have pushed themselves so hard that there was no more sweat left in their bodies or their tongues begin to dry up through sheer exhaustion, and still keep on?

"That is what I mean by guts. The third thing, of course, is physical fitness. This may seen a little high-handed as I have never trained myself overmuch but I have what I call natural stamina. being able to go the distance most times."

He went on: "Maybe this is only an excuse for laziness, but that is my theory. I can see too many young country lads, physically fit from manual labour, being dragged into training sessions and only having their muscles tightened up by physical jerks and so on, leaving them in such a way that they do not look forward to any more exercise.

"These players would be far better off with less exercises and then they would be sharp and keen to have a go. Any reasonably fit youngster who looks after himself by eating well and not drinking or smoking too much should be capable of staying the pace for at least one hour's play."

After so many years in top class handball there must be some individual games which stand out in his memory. Peter admits that all the All-Ireland finals would be remembered, especially the first, but the one game he remembers as illustrating his former points was a semi-final handball singles game against the best handballer in the country, Paddy Hickey from Tipperary.

This game was played in Roscommon in 1965 and Peter was being beaten two games to nil and being led 19-9 in the third. However, he fought back, won that game 21-20, and won the next two 21-12, 21-5.

Again in last year's singles final the score stood at two games each between himself and Pat McGarry from Limerick. In the final and fifth game McGarry was leading 20-12 and looked set for victory. In a last ditch stand Peter edged him out and retained his title. Great games he remembers too, are doubles matches with Paddy Bollingbrook, "the iron man from Castlebar," and himself played against Tipperary and Kildare. All five game matches where the Mayo players fought back from two games down to win in the fifth. This was the partnership which won three titles in a row in 1965/'66/'67.

When asked to name the greatest player, without hesitation Peter plumped for the famed John Ryan from Wexford, who had everything. The best doubles partnership, undoubtedly Paddy Downey and Jimmy O'Brien from Kerry.

As regards any question of retirement Peter's answer was: "I will definitely hand over to someone but not until some young player in the county comes up to beat me. Then I can say that I have a successor to take over."

But at this stage there does not seem to be any other player on the horizon, so it looks as if the man to whom winning the four Connacht titles in one year is becoming a formality will be around for many more years to come to hold the name of Mayo to the fore in handball circles.

Below is a list of All-Ireland titles won by him:

1962—Junior Softball Doubles with Mick Walsh.
1965—Senior Hardball Singles.
1965—Senior Hardball Doubles with P. Bolingbrook.
1966—Senior Softball Doubles with M. Walsh.
1966—Senior Hardball Doubles with P. Bolingbrook.
1967—Senior Hardball Singles.
1967—Senior Hardball Doubles with P. Bolingbrook.
1972—Senior Hardball Singles.
1973—Senior Hardball Singles.
1974—Senior Hardball Singles.
1974—Senior Hardball Doubles with B. Colleran.
1975—Senior Hardball Singles.

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