



# NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE



Fr. Tierney Park,  
Ballyshannon

SUNDAY, MARCH 8th, 1987

3.00 p.m.

## Dún na nGall

v

## Laois

(N.F.L. title holders)

REITEOIR:

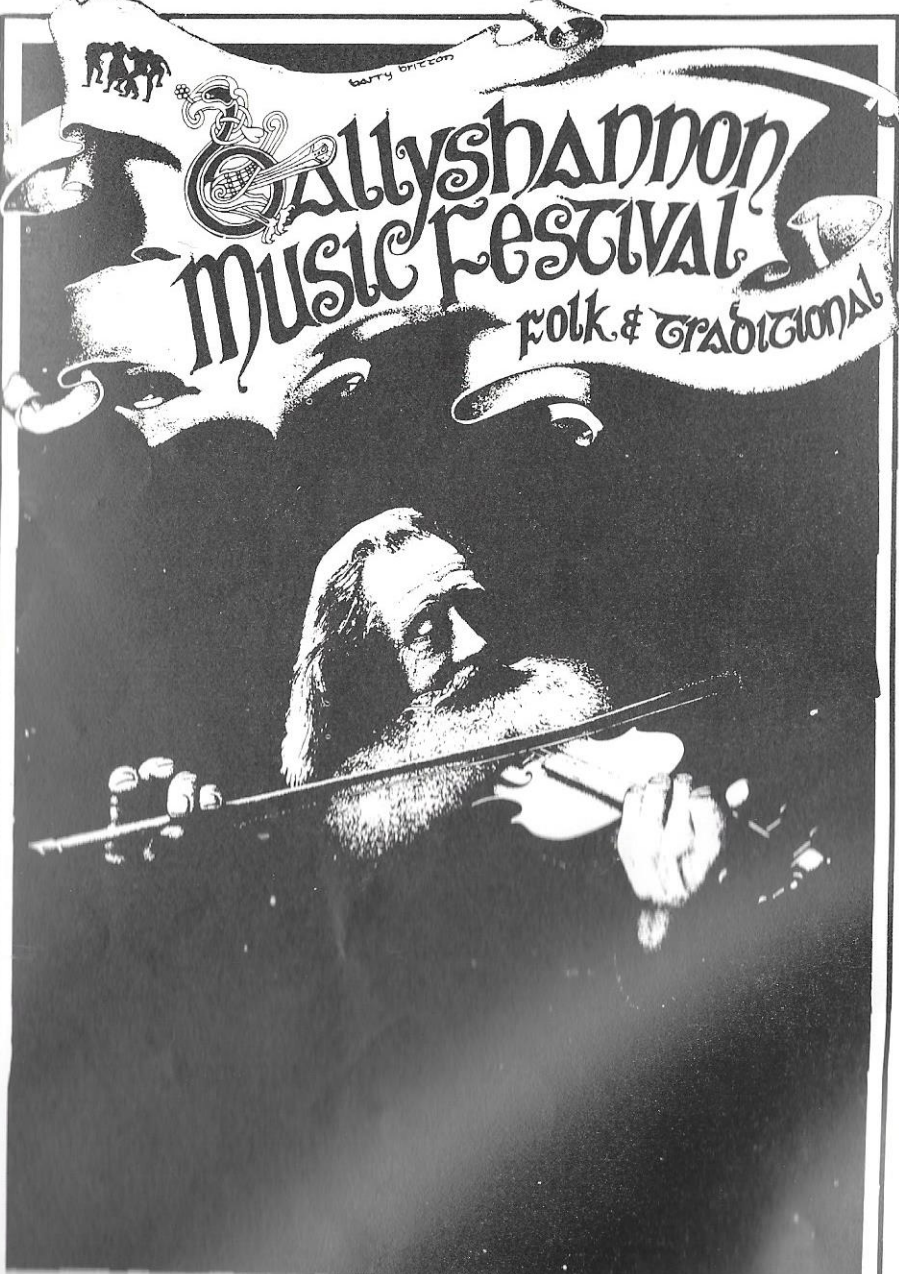
S. Ó MUIRÍ  
(Muineachain)



MATCH PROGRAMME  
50p



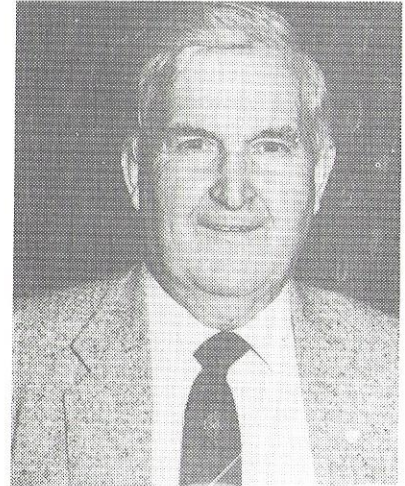
Programme published by  
Park Committee  
Aodh Ruadh C.L.G.



**AUGUST HOLIDAY WEEKEND, 1987**  
**Fri. July 31; Sat. Aug. 1 & Sun. Aug. 2**

# FÁILTE

Guíom céad míle fáilte roimh foireann An Laois go Béal Átha Seanaigh ins an cluiche sraithe seo.



My welcome to Laois is doubly warm because they come here as current National Football League champions, a title they justly won in the 1985/'86 League season. While the harsh realities of Gaelic football at this level has decreed that the title will go to different winners in the current season, the Laois success of last year was one welcomed far and wide by G.A.A. followers. It's always good to see new and promising names on National trophies.

Again I must pay tribute to our own loyal supporters who have given Donegal much encouragement at both home and away venues this season. This support at games and for our fund-raising ventures is fundamental to our development as a footballing force in Ulster and nationally.

A word of thanks also to the Park Committee of the Aodh Ruadh Club for their arrangements and for producing a fine match programme. Go raibh míle maith agaibh.

CATHAL Ó FACHTNA, Cathaoirleach,  
 Coiste Chonndae, C.L.G.

## MESSAGE FROM PARK COMMITTEE AODH RUADH G.A.A. CLUB

A warm welcome is extended to the Laois team and supporters and to the players, mentors and followers of our own county team. This is an important day for both Laois and Donegal and all involved in the G.A.A. locally are proud to be part of it.

The development programme undertaken at these grounds since 1981 has resulted in an accumulated debt of £10,000+ which must be cleared quickly so that the job of providing additional playing pitches in Ballyshannon can be tackled.

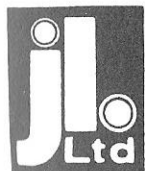
With this in mind, Fr. Tierney Park Supporters Club memberships are available at £10 each. All paid up members may attend a free Big Games Session in the Mercy Hall on Friday, 10th April, at 9.00 p.m. where very attractive cash prizes will be on offer. Handbills outlining the details are in circulation at today's game and your support by taking out a membership would make a very positive contribution to the facilities we have developed here in a few short years.

Go raibh maith agat.

Programme compiled by Tom Daly, Michael Daly, Peter Campbell.

● Cover photo: Action from the Donegal v Tyrone match as Plunkett Donaghy and Martin Griffin rise for a high ball with Harry McClure lending a helping hand.

(Photo by Michael O'Donnell, Glenties)



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## ON THEIR LAST OUTING . . .

Two weeks ago both Donegal and Laois faced important away games in the Ford N.F.L. Donegal had to travel to far-away Greenlough to take on a Derry side that shared the top spot in Division II with Cork. The Donegal side travelled as underdogs to what everyone knew in their hearts was the crunch game if promotion hopes were to remain alive. Laois, the proud holders of the N.F.L. title, had an away clash with Longford, always a formidable league team on their own patch. This is how the games went:

Donegal ..... 1-9  
Derry ..... 0-7

Longford ..... 1-4  
Laois ..... 0-6

A fast and intelligent Donegal display left Derry looking like anything but First Division hopefuls. While the men in red and white were bigger and stronger than the Tirconnaill side, they failed miserably to use their plentiful possession. Without doubt, Derry's lack of a capable freetaker contributed much to their demise.

Donegal hit hard, taking Derry by surprise with quick and robust tackling that saw six of the visitors' names go into the referee's little book.

Donegal led by four points to three after a non-too-exciting first 30 minutes but started the second half in style with points from McHugh and Maguire. After eight minutes Manus Boyle was on hands to finish to the net a blasting shot at goal from Brendan Dunleavy which had been parried by Derry keeper McKenna. A further point from McHugh in the 40th minute opened up a seven point gap in Donegal's favour.

In the closing fifteen minutes Derry brought Tony Scullion to midfield and this brought a revival which produced four Terence McGuckian points to reduce the gap to a goal with seven minutes remaining. Donegal rebounded with points from Manus Boyle and Martin McHugh to leave the issue beyond all doubt. Overall it was a good Donegal performance which saw Martin McHugh very much in form and good displays also from Joyce McMullan, Des Newton, Manus Boyle, Matt Gallagher and Donal Reid.

**Donegal:** N. McCole; E. Gallagher, T. McDermott, D. Newton; M. Sweeney, D. Reid, M. Gallagher; M. Griffin, J. McMullan (0-1); D. Bonner, M. Lafferty, M. McHugh (0-6); S. Maguire (0-1), B. Dunleavy, M. Boyle (1-1). Sub., A. Molloy for M. Lafferty.

Played in Pearse Park, Longford, the points from this game were important for both teams. As it turned out, Longford registered a surprise win and helped to keep their hopes of survival in Division II alive.

This was a bad result for Laois who fared better in a poor first half to lead at the short whistle by one point.

Early in the second half Longford took the lead with a brace of points from John McCormack. In the 42nd minute Laois hearts dropped when, in a goalmouth drama, goalkeeper Martin Conroy was caught out of position and a clever chip from Longford's Des Barry was fisted to the net by their big and effective full forward, Kevin O'Rourke.

Laois now rued shooting eleven wides in the first half as repeated attacking efforts were foiled by Longford's full-back Ciaran Gillooley and corner back Cathal Lee whose workmanlike performances contributed heavily to what was a shock defeat for the champions.

The Laois defeat in this game was all the more disappointing as the side had dominated mid-field where Liam Irwin won a lot of possession.

Overall it was a less than happy performance for the N.F.L. title holders with only Colm Browne, Pat Dunne and Martin Dempsey really playing up to scratch.

**Laois:** M. Conroy; P. Dunne, M. Dempsey, E. Kelly; M. Aherne, P. Brophy, C. Browne; M. Dempsey, L. Irwin (0-1); N. Roe, P. Critchley (0-1), T. Prendergast (0-1); P. Doran, G. Lawlor, C. Maguire (0-2). Subs., N. Prendergast (0-1) for G. Lawlor; L. Turley for Doran; T. Conroy for Browne.

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## LAOIS ... A YEAR IS A LONG TIME IN FOOTBALL

*By Seán McGoldrick (Irish Press)*

One suspects that Laois footballers will always remember the Spring of last year. Having gone through their Division III (South) programme undefeated — they drew with Carlow in the opening round — they qualified to meet Down who had emerged as Division One winners in the quarter final of the inaugural Ford sponsored league.

Few gave them much of a chance against the Mournemen, but at the end of a thrilling hour's football at Croke Park the sides were level and a typically opportunistic goal from Tom Prendergast in extra time took the Leinster side into the semi-finals. Indeed, the return of the Portlaoise clubman to the county colours played a pivotal role in fashioning the Laois revival.

So it was on to a semi-final against Dublin and one wondered whether Laois' nonchalant attitude towards the game being fixed for Croke Park would not seriously backfire on them yet Laois needed no motivation for the game — as they had waited almost eight months to avenge their 1985 Leinster championship final defeat by Dublin. Their morale was further boosted when inspirational midfielder, John Costello, returned from the United States and was selected for the game.

It's history now that not alone did Laois beat Dublin but they went on to dethrone the League champions, Monaghan, in the final by a single point to win their first national trophy since they had won the first ever National League in 1926 — exactly 60 years before. Who says there is no sentiment in sport!

Predictably, the team was feted throughout the O'Moore County; there was talk of a Leinster championship, even an All-Ireland title and all those illusions were merely confirmed when Laois thrashed All-Ireland champions, Kerry, in a tournament game to mark the official opening of a renovated O'Moore Park in Portlaoise.

The dream turned sour on a beautiful summer's day in Aughrim when Laois lost their head as well as their ambition, to allow Wicklow score one of the shock championship wins of the 1986 season.

Arguably, Laois' league form this season has reflected the inherent inconsistencies in the team. Early wins, including a notable away success against the All-Ireland finalists, Tyrone, have been overshadowed by losses by a single point in their last three outings to Derry, Kildare and Longford. And, now with a single game remaining in the league, they must garner reward from this contest today if they are to avoid relegation after just one season in Division II.

Their affable manager, Kieran Brennan, remains optimistic that the side will still be a force in the Leinster championship, but his primary concern at the moment is for the team to stay in Division II. Their principal shortcoming, which was evident even during their successful league campaign of last season is their lack of scoring power, a problem not unknown in Donegal football either. They depend to an inordinate degree on the scoring power, both from play and frees of All-Star midfielder, Liam Irwin, and their fundamental problems will hardly be solved until the forwards start scoring more regularly.

For Laois a year has certainly been a long time in football!

● A prolific writer on G.A.A. affairs, Seán McGoldrick was G.A.A. writer with the Sligo Champion for several years before joining the Press Group of Newspapers.

# CONAGHAN'S CORNER

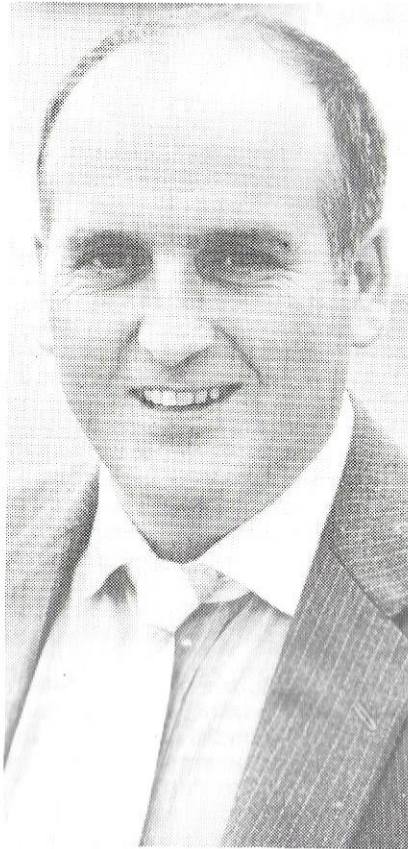
Last summer following numerous requests from clubs and supporters from every corner of Donegal I decided to contest the post of manager of the county's senior team. Encouraged by success at club level while managing Four Masters and county level with the victorious Under-21 1982 team I felt confident in taking over.

In the short term I hoped to consolidate the county's position in Division 2 of the National League and have a good run in the championship. This was realistic when one considers that Donegal were beaten in the first round of the Ulster Championship and finished in the middle of Division 2 last year.

It was my immediate ambition to get a good committed panel of players together who were willing to work hard towards improving the county's standing. Contrary to recent media speculation I am delighted with the response received from the panel. As a result we find ourselves today with a real chance of promotion thanks to the commitment, dedication and unselfish efforts of the players. I think short term hope was that the Co. Board management and players could be welded into a closer unit. Again under Micheal Gillespie and Charlie Faulkner, I feel that this harmony has been achieved. The team can only benefit from this goodwill.

I am fortunate in having two of the county's and Ulster's greatest ever footballers assisting and advising with training, team selection and general tactics. Sean Ferriter, who has travelled from Dublin to be present at many training sessions and Donal Monaghan are respected all over Ireland.

The last link and certainly not least in importance in the chain are the supporters. You have travelled to Kildare, Longford and Derry in great numbers for our away games, plus Ballybofey and Ballyshannon for our home fixtures.



I sincerely thank you on behalf of the panel of management. Let's hope we can give you a victory today.

Obviously much has still to be done. To survive in a Division that includes the 1986 National League champions and the All Ireland finalists proves that the squad have plenty of character and dedication. Our success in our last away game to Derry was very encouraging.

A victory today against League champions, Laois, who have relegation staring them in the face, will be extremely difficult but possible. Let's hope we get the result that everyone in Donegal is expecting.

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Glas agus Óir

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Noel McCole  
(St. Eunan's)

2

**A. Ó GALLCHOIR**

Eunan Gallagher  
(Aodh Ruadh)

3

**S. Ó CNÁIMHSÍ**

Sean Bonner  
(Na Rossa)

4

**D. Ó NÚTAIN**

Des Newton  
(Urris)

5

**M. Ó GALLCHOIR**

Matt Gallagher  
(N. Brid)

6

**D. Ó RIADA**

Donal Reid  
(Red Hughs)

7

**M. Mac SUIBHNE**

Myles Sweeney  
(Dungloe)

8

**M. Ó GRIOFA**

Martin Griffin  
(MacCumhails)

9

**S. Mac MAOLÁIN**

Joyce McMullan  
(Four Masters)

10

**D. Ó CNÁIMHSÍ**

Declan Bonner  
(Na Rossa)

11

**M. Ó LAIFEARTAIGH**

Michael Lafferty  
(MacCumhails)

12

**M. Mac AOIDH**

Martin McHugh  
(Kilcar)

13

**S. Mac UIDHIR**

Sylvester Maguire  
(Aodh Ruadh)

14

**B. Mac DUINSHLÉIBHE**

Brendan Dunleavy  
(MacCumhails)

15

**M. Ó BAOILL**

Manus Boyle  
(Killybegs)

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FIRST HALF	GOALS	POINTS	WIDES	45's
DONEGAL				
LAOIS				

# LAOIS

Gorm agus Bán

1

**M. Ó CONRAOI**

Martin Conroy  
(Ballyroan)

2

**P. Ó DOINN**

Pat Dunne  
(Ballyroan)

3

**M. Ó DÍOMASAIGH**

Martin Dempsey  
(St. Joseph's)

4

**E. Ó CEALLAIGH**

Eddie Kelly  
(O'Dempsey's)

5

**M. Ó HEATHÍRN**

Michael Aherne  
(O'Dempsey's)

6

**P. Ó BRÓITHE**

Pat Brophy  
(Emo)

7

**C. DE BRÚN**

Colm Browne (capt.)  
(Portlaoise)

8

**M. Ó DÍOMASAIGH**

Michael Dempsey  
(St. Joseph's)

9

**S. Ó NUALLÁIN**

Joe Nolan  
(Graiguecullen)

10

**N. Ó RUA**

Noel Roe  
(Heath)

11

**T. DE PRIONDRAGÁS**

Tom Prendergast  
(Portlaoise)

12

**C. Mac UIDHIR**

Christy Maguire  
(Graiguecullen)

13

**L. Ó HEIREAMHÓIN**

Liam Irwin  
(Ballyroan)

14

**P. CRICHLAOIGH**

Pat Critchley  
(Portlaoise)

15

**N. DE PRIONDRAGÁS**

Noel Prendergast  
(Portlaoise)

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DONEGAL				
LAOIS				

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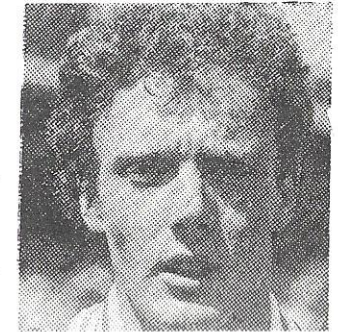
## THE LAOIS ALL-STARS

Two Laois players, Liam Irwin and Colm Browne, were among the six inter-county footballers who recently received Bank of Ireland G.A.A. All-Star awards for the first time in respect of their services in the blue and white jersey during 1986. They were joined in this new elite by Plunkett Donaghy, John Lynch and Damien O'Hagan of Tyrone and Monaghan's Ray McCarron.



**Colm Browne**

1986 is the year that will leave an indelible mark on Colm Browne's footballing memory. The honour of captaining his county to its first national title for decades was gloriously capped with his selection as an All-Star. A member of the Portlaoise club, Browne has won senior county championship, provincial championship and one All-Ireland club championship with this great club. Along the way he has also twice won Railway Cup honours with Leinster. Colm is an accomplished defender, being a wing-back from the modern era who believes that attack is the best form of defence and likes to come forward. His influence on the field has been fundamental to the success of Laois but his contributions extends far beyond that with his off the field leadership having earned him the respect of fellow players, mentors and supporters alike.



**Liam Irwin**

It was as a talented 16 year old that the Ballyroan man made his debut for Laois in a challenge game against Roscommon. He made a huge impact during Laois' successful run in the knockout stages of the league last spring becoming a household name in the space of a few gilt edged weeks of glory for Laois football. His pivotal role as a midfielder aside, Irwin's scoring rate from play and frees was a key factor in Laois' ultimate success in last year's N.F.L. Many would feel that Laois overdepend on him for scores. In 1986 he was the well deserved recipient of a B. & I. Player of the Month Award for his achievements and is now nearing full fitness again after receiving a serious ankle ligament injury when he played for the Rest of Ireland against Kerry for GOAL on January 26th.

● Compiled by Sean McGoldrick (Irish Press)

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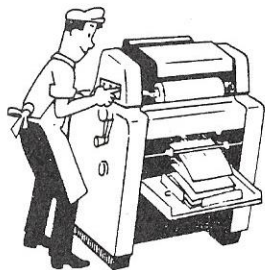
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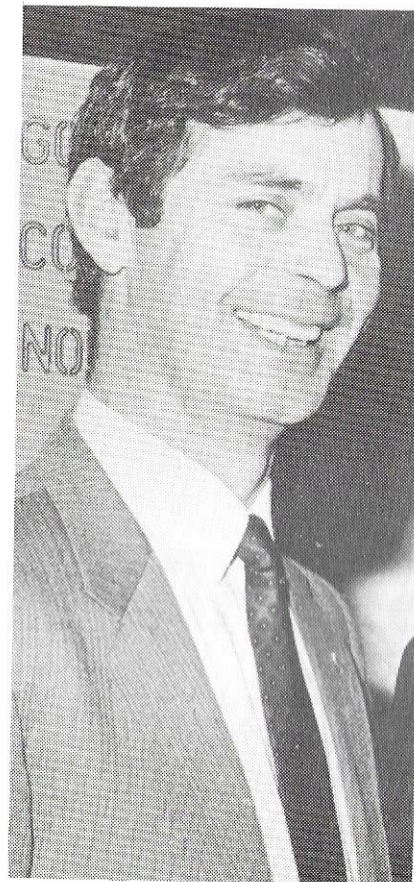
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## THE '87 CHAMPIONSHIP — MY ASSESSMENT *By Brian McEniff*



● Brian McEniff, former Donegal team-manager, is the current manager of the Ulster team.

Donegal's future prospects look very good indeed. After losing their opening game in the National Football League, the team is within one game of promotion, a fine achievement by any measure.

Looking forward to the championship season I see good grounds for optimism. With a likely first round game against Armagh I feel we have got the better part of the draw. Currently in the process of team-building Armagh had a bad start to their N.F.L. campaign but of late have strung

together a few good victories in their fight against relegation. In latter years this side play a good brand of open football and Donegal invariably enjoy their football against them. However, in the tight confines of MacCumhaill Park in June I would be very confident of Donegal securing a place in the Ulster semi-final. Armagh have never liked playing in Ballybofey and in a tight championship game even that can count for a lot.

In the other first round fixture of relevance to Donegal's hopes, Antrim and Tyrone meet in Casement Park, Belfast. In the present league Antrim got off to a very poor start but improved to record important home wins against both Offaly and Louth in Casement Park. Home advantage will be of great importance to Antrim and will give the side confidence. Tyrone have really struggled hard since playing in last year's All-Ireland final against Kerry but Arthur McRory is a shrewd coach and manager and I feel that despite a bad winter and the severe handicap of having to field without a player of the calibre of Eugene McKenna, Tyrone's grit, experience and self respect will see them over the initial hurdle.

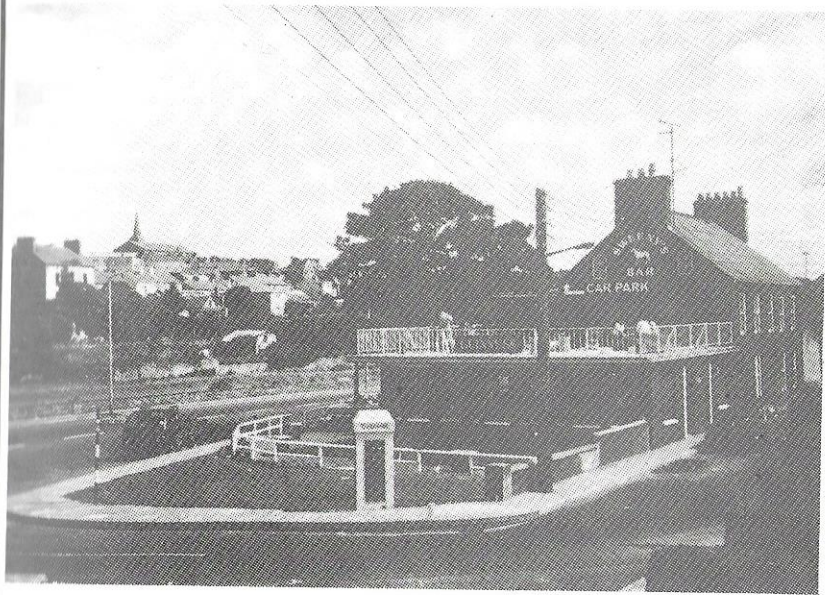
A Donegal v Tyrone Ulster semi-final has all the hallmarks of real Ulster championship fare. The record proves that its nigh impossible to come out of Ulster in two consecutive years and I forecast that after an epic struggle in front of one of the biggest Ulster championship crowds of 1987, Donegal will make it through to the Ulster final after a tough, hard encounter with Tyrone.

The other semi-final is very hard to predict. Its a tough section with Cavan/Monaghan v Down/Derry. However, my guess is that Cavan's young squad will go under to Monaghan who will account for either Down or Derry at the semi-final stage. This will set the scene for a repeat of the 1979 Ulster championship final with Donegal to get the result on this occasion.

An All-Ireland semi-final against either Meath or Dublin with a place in the final against Cork or Kerry conjures up all sorts of memories of Donegal success in 1982 and 1983 and the excitement that is an inherent part of playing at the top level in Croke Park.

I take this opportunity to wish Tom and the boys every success against Laois today and in the forthcoming championship.





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## KIERAN BRENNAN ... "ON A WING AND A PRAYER"

Four years into his reign as Laois manager Kieran Brennan brings his side to Ballyshannon today on a wing and a prayer.

Now facing possible demotion to Division III the descent of Laois has been as spectacular as their rise to the title of League champions in 1986.

Little has gone right for Laois in this year's league. On their last three outings against Derry, Kildare and Longford they have lost by one point. Now, Brennan freely admits that as well as playing well they must have the one ingredient that to date has eluded their play — luck.

"We have gone up to Donegal a number of times and seem to have lost more often than not; this time we just have to win, and we can, if we have a little luck," surmised the optimistic Brennan.

He admitted that there was a lot depending on the outcome for Laois. While they had not attached great significance to the league earlier in the season their supporters, said Brennan, certainly didn't want the side to go from League champions to Division Three. "We want to stay in Division Two, but we set the championship as the objective having won the League last year," he commented.

The poor results to date for Laois have been partly due to the absence of the excellent John Costello (emigrated) and stalwarts Eamon Whelan and Willie Brennan, two forwards who since retirement have deprived the side of real score getters. Injuries to Gerry Lalor and Gerry Browne have further weakened the side.

However, Brennan, a detective in the Garda force based at Donnybrook, is not too uptight about the prospects for his side. So unlike the Donegal camp, Laois seem very casual about the league. Brennan reflects that attitude: "We didn't take Donegal into consideration before the last game against Longford. We thought we could get a win there, now we have to look at the whole thing again and assess this Donegal side", he said.

Brennan, who enjoyed a thirteen year inter-county career with Laois, will no doubt rely on that experience. He can also call on his experience at inter-provincial level having played for Leinster in 1969, '70 and '76.

The Laois manager lives in Dublin with his wife and three children and commutes to

O'Moore Park, Portlaoise, for the once weekly training sessions.

He explained that they had decided to ease the training for the winter, as they felt that their failure to show their league form in last year's Leinster championship was in a great way due to the extra effort they put into winning the league.

Again, in stark contrast to the current feeling in the Donegal camp, he said Laois were not going to get down to serious training until the end of March.

"We don't want to be hitting our peak too early, last year we were done out by the championship, this time Laois will be ready, but not over prepared when they meet Carlow and, hopefully, Meath in the first two rounds of the championship", he explained.

Apart from their last visit to Donegal on March 3rd, 1985, for the Ford Open Draw competition, Brennan has seen little of Donegal. "I know about a few of their players but can't say I know as much as I would like to know about them," he said.

### SNIPPETS

The current Donegal side is based to a significant extent on their All-Ireland winning U-21 side from 1982. Donegal beat Laois in the All-Ireland semi-final that year and many of the latter team have also graduated to senior ranks including Liam Irwin, Martin Conroy, Christy Maguire and Eddie Kelly.

\* \* \* \* \*

Dual player Pat Critchley won a Trench Cup medal with Thomond College, Limerick, in 1983 and one of his team mates was Donegal's Pauric Gallagher from Ballintra, who is now a regular on the UCD soccer team and is a brother of defender, Matt Gallagher.

\* \* \* \* \*

One of the greatest footballers ever produced by Laois was Tommy Murphy, known as the "Boy Wonder". He made his senior championship debut in 1937 when he was just 17 and his displays against Kerry in the 1937 and '38 All-Ireland semi-finals established him as one of the great exponents of Gaelic football.

*Best wishes to Donegal from*

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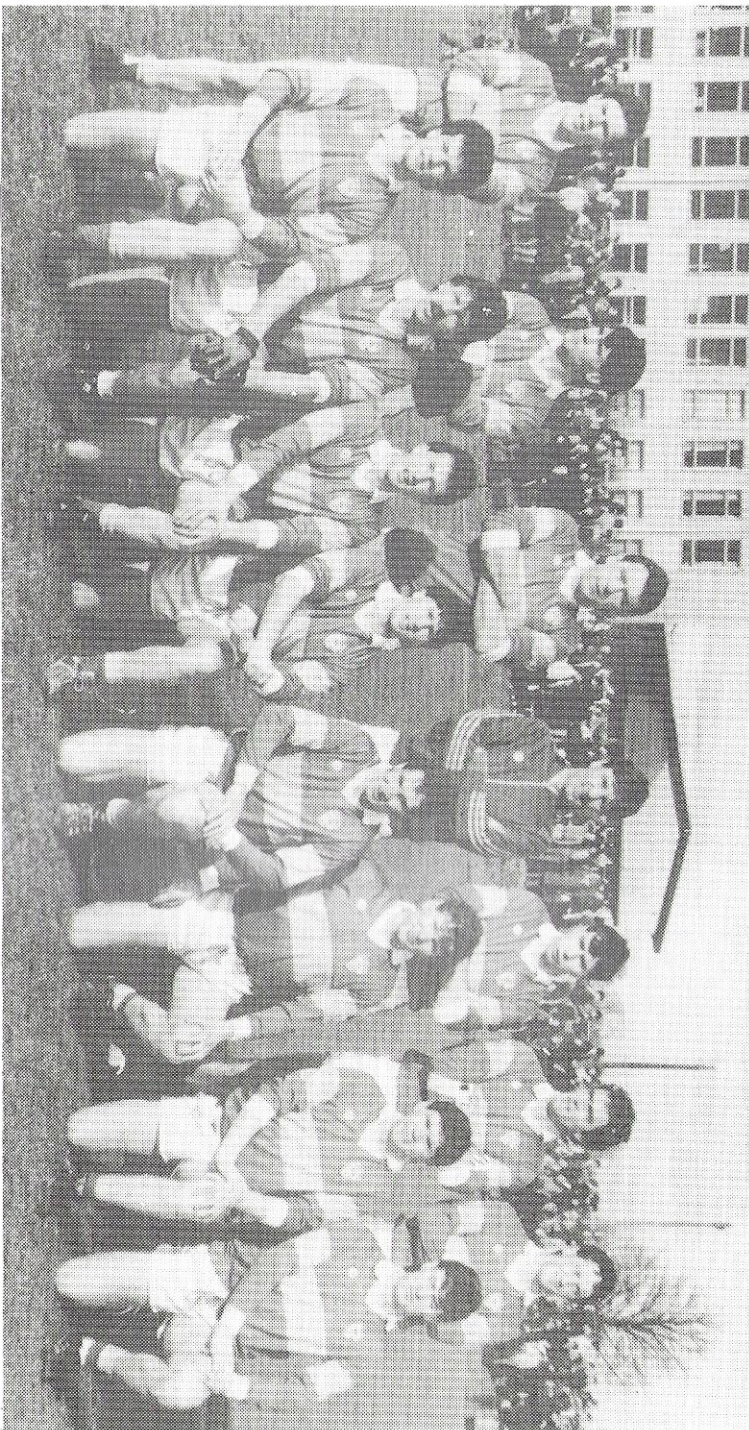
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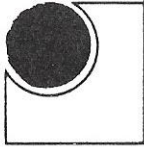
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The Donegal team which defeated Derry at Greenlough in their last League game. Back row, from left: Sylvester Maguire, Eunan Gallagher, Martin Griffin, Noel McCole, Des Newton, Brendan Dunleavy, Joyce McMullan. Front row, from left: Tommy McDermott, Michael Lafferty, Myles Sweeney, Martin McHugh, Donal Reid, Declan Bonner, Matt Gallagher, Mannus Boyle.



North Western Health Board  
HEALTH EDUCATION UNIT

# KEEP YOUR BODY FIT TO LIVE IN

## SMOKING AND FITNESS

- NO MATTER HOW FIT YOU THINK YOU ARE SMOKING WILL HOLD YOU BACK
- SMOKING CAN HARM YOUR LUNGS, HEART AND CIRCULATION IN MANY WAYS.
- YOU ARE SEVERAL TIMES MORE LIKELY TO SUFFER FROM SERIOUS DISEASE
- EVEN IF YOU ESCAPE ILLNESS THERE ARE OTHER PROBLEMS

- (1) SMOKERS COUGH
- (2) FREQUENT SORE THROATS
- (3) SHORTNESS OF BREATH

TAKE OUR ADVICE

STOP

# SMOKING

