

**A** REMARKABLE feature of Ahane's second junior hurling championship's success was the fact that the team played five games in the space of seven weeks—March 8th, 1931, beat Young Irelands, 9-4 to 3-1, at the Gaelic Grounds; March 15th, beat St. Patrick's, 4-8 to 1-4, at Herbert's Field, Sallymount; March 22nd, beat Caherline, 8-4 to 5-0, at Gaelic Grounds; April 12th, Co. Semi-Final, beat Templeglantine, 11-1 to 3-0, at Croom; April 19th, Co. Final, beat Bruree, 8-5 to 1-3, at Croom.

Mick Mackey was injured in the match with Templeglantine, and did not play in the final, when the Ahane team was:—P. O'Shea, P. Hilliard, M. McDonagh, J. Ryan, M. Ryan, M. Quinlivan, E. McDonagh, J. Mackey, P. Joyce, J. Burns, P. O'Brien, T. Ryan, M. Hourigan, E. Delaney, M. Hickey.

Limerick opened 1932 with a great display against Tipperary, at Kilmallock, in the Jim Riordan Testimonial Tournament Final, on February 21st. Tipperary fielded the bulk of the players that had won All-Ireland honours in 1930, and a draw was a fitting result to an exciting and hard-fought game. The Shannonside fifteen was:—T. Shinney, T. Ryan, M. Cross, J. Kelly, M. Mackey, T. McCarthy, P. Joyce, D. Clohessey, P. Clohessey, M. Liston, J. Ryan, M. Fitzgibbon, J. Mackey, M. Haran, T. O'Brien.

In the re-play at the same venue on April 10th, Tipperary won, 4-2 to 2-3.

### FEIS SEMI-FINAL AND FINAL

Limerick had revenge on May 1st, when in the semi-final of the Thomond Feis competition they beat the Premier County men, 5-4 to 4-1. In the second semi-final Clare caused quite a sensation by defeating Cork, all-Ireland champions, 4-3 to 3-4.

The Feis final on June 12th proved one of the outstanding games of the period. Three quarter way through Limerick forged ahead but Clare fought back in sterling fashion and were fighting hard for a winning goal when the long whistle brought relief to a sorely tried but brilliant Limerick back line.

This was the first big Limerick success with the team, which made such hurling history in after years, and Mick's first inter-county medal. The names of that fifteen will be recalled with interest:—Paddy Scanlan (goal), D. O'Malley, P. Clohessey, T. Ryan, J. Lane, M. Mackey, M. Fitzgibbon, T. O'Brien, M. Hough, John Roche, Jim Roche, E. Cregan, M. Cross, P. Joyce, D. Clohessey.

### LIMERICK ROSE TO GREAT HEIGHTS.

Mick Mackey rates that final one of the most exciting of his early games, and feels that Limerick, who won 2-6 to 2-4, rose to great heights that evening. Clare subsequently proved their worth by winning the Munster title, but were narrowly beaten by a great Kilkenny team in

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the Blue Riband decider.

Limerick beat Tipperary, 4-2 to 1-5, in the opening round of the Munster Championships, at Cork. Mick Mackey was playing on John Maher that day, the latter being flanked by two of Ireland's best half-backs of the period—Phil Purcell and Garrett Howard.

The Cork-Limerick semi-final clash attracted a great crowd to Thurles on July 17th, and they were rewarded with one of the best games of many seasons, the Leesiders forging ahead in the concluding stages of a terrific struggle, to win, 5-4 to 3-5. Highlight of the day were the duels between Mick Mackey and Cork's great centre-half-back, Jim Regan.

### CORK A BIG OPPOSITION.

"Cork were All-Ireland champions at the time," Mick recalls. "They had defeated Kilkenny in a second re-play of the 1931 final, and with four Blue Ribands in the preceding six years to their credit it was certainly no disgrace to be beaten by them."

Timmy Ryan captained the Limerick team, Paddy Scanlan was in goal. Those two, with Mick Mackey, Paddy Joyce and Denis O'Malley made five Ahane men on the side. Young Ireland with Micky Fitzgibbon, Bob McConkey, and Tommy O'Brien, and Fedamore with Tommy McCarthy, Paddy and Dave Clohessey, had three apiece; the remaining positions being filled by Ned Cregan and John Roche (Newcastle West) Micky Cross (Claughaun) and Micky Hough (Young Irelands, Dublin), John Mackey (Ahane), and Christy O'Brien (Cappamore) came on as subs. during the course of the game.

A record crowd for a first round game were at Croom to see Ahane defend their title against the 1931 champions, Young Ireland.

### A GREAT GAME.

Mick remembers it as "a great game in which no quarter was given or sought. It was a good, sporting tussle withal. Ahane appeared to have matters well under control at the interval, when we led, 2-3 to 1-0.

"The second half was not long under way, however, before it was apparent we were up against it, and ten minutes from the end a great goal by veteran Bob McConkey, scored almost from the corner flag, put Young Ireland ahead for the first time, to eventually beat us 6-1 to 2-5. That was the only hurling championship defeat we suffered between 1931 and 1940."

The teams that exciting day were: Young Ireland—Micky Fitzgibbon (captain), Jim Fitzgerald (goal), P. O'Shaughnessy, J. Kelly, M. O'Shea, G. Markham, M. Kennedy, P. Kennedy, J. Mullane, J. O'Dowd, T. O'Brien, R. McConkey, W. O'Donoghue, J. O'Shea, T. Mullane. Ahane—Timmy Ryan (captain), Paddy Scanlan (goal), J. Ryan, M. Ryan,

M. Mackey, J. Mackey, D. O'Malley, J. Moloney, D. Givens, P. Joyce, E. McDonagh, M. McDonagh, M. Hickey, E. O'Brien, M. Quinlivan, M. Aherne.

### TOURNAMENT OUTINGS.

Ahane were more successful in their tournament outings. With victories over Adare and Fedamore, they won the second Aonach Kin-cora Tournament trophies, and then went on to take the 1916 Memorial Cup and Medals, defeating Eire Og (Cork) in the semi-final and Newmarket-on-Fergus (Clare) in the final.

In the semi-final of the Rath Luirc Tournament they had a good win over Cork's Nemo Rangers, and met Glen Rovers, then coming into the Cork championship limelight, in the final. It proved a right tough struggle, and Ahane were ahead, 2-3 to 2-2, ten minutes from time when a dispute arose and the game was abandoned. A replay was eventually agreed upon, which Ahane won, 3-5 to 2-2.

Dealing with the National Hurling League campaign of that season, in which Limerick contested the final with Kilkenny, Mick told me the opening game was a most exciting one. Their opponents were Tipperary and the venue was Thurles. It was a very bad day, but those that braved the elements were treated to a thrilling tussle, which Limerick won by a solitary point.

Three weeks later, Galway beat Limerick, at Tuam, 4-2 to 3-3, after a first-class contest, with excitement intense throughout. Mick was not playing on that occasion, being laid up with a heavy cold.

### HOME GAMES.

The next two games were home ones, Limerick disposing of Offaly, 7-2 to 3-3, and Clare (Munster champions), 4-2 to 2-2.

A play-off was necessary to decide divisional honours. This took place at Limerick and resulted: Limerick 3-2, Tipperary 1-1.

"We thus qualified to meet Kilkenny in the National League final," Mick told me. "The game took place at Nowlan Park, on April 9th, 1933. Great interest centered in our meeting and a huge Limerick crowd made the trip. I was playing left-half forward that day, and had as opponent, Paddy Phelan.

"Limerick opened very strongly and had most of the play for twenty minutes, but our forward work was very faulty. Then Micky Cross, playing a great game, was injured and had to retire, and Kilkenny forged ahead by the interval, 1-4 to 1-0.

"On the turnover, we cut the leeway, Timmy Ryan sending a pair of lovely points. Then Micky Fitzgibbon had to go off with an injury and our defences collapsed, Kilkenny winning readily, 3-8 to 1-3.

### THE NORESIDE TEAM.

"Eddie Doyle captained that Nore-side team, which included many players we were to meet often-times in after years: Paddy Larkin, Peter O'Reilly, "Sag" Carroll, Paddy Phelan, Paddy and Eddie Byrne, Lory Meagher, Timmy Leahy, Johnny Dunne, hero of the 1933 All-Ireland final, Martin and Matty Power.

"Timmy Ryan was Limerick's captain; Paddy Scanlan gave a wonderful display in goals. Our full-backs were: Ned Cregan, Tommy McCarthy and D. O'Malley, Paddy Clohessey, Micky Cross, and Micky Fitzgibbon manned the half-back line and when the latter pair were injured their places were taken by P. Joyce and J. J. Moloney.

"My brother, John, partnered Timmy Ryan at midfield, and with me in the forward line were M. Quinlivan and C. O'Brien. Our top forwards were D. Clohessey, M. Ryan and M. Hough.

"That was my first introduction to really big hurling and, although beaten that day, we won the next five National League titles in a row, and John helped Limerick to six League successes—the only hurler to win six National League medals."

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