

No. 176—MICK MACKEY of Aha ne (Continued)

OWING to their American tour, Limerick were given a bye to the 1936 Munster Hurling Final.

For the fourth year in succession, Limerick won the Southern hurling crown, when they beat Tipperary, at Thurles, 8-5 to 4-6.

The "Irish Independent" report of that game said: "If one man more than another is deserving of credit for bringing victory to Limerick it was Mick Mackey, who was here, there and everywhere, and contributed no less than five goals and three points to the winners' total score. John Mackey was also well in the picture, and through the hour the brothers played with perfect understanding."

It was Mick's first time captaining the Shannonsiders in a championship duel. His initial essay as skipper of the side was marked by a marvellous display of hurling in which he rampaged from end to end of the field, opening up an attack or stemming a raid as necessity arose. In fact, he gave as brilliant an individual performance as has been seen for years, giving and taking hard knocks with a smile, while some of the scores that came as a result of his solo efforts were gems of constructive work.

In the All-Ireland semi-final, Limerick were fixed to play Galway, and the meeting took place at Roscrea before 10,850 spectators (gate receipts, £775 19s.).

Galway led at the interval, 2-3 to 0-7, after a half hour of thrills and a hundred and one exciting incidents that filled in that palpitating first moiety. It was maybe over robust, but withal clean and sportingly contested. The imperturbable, hawk-eyed Tom O'Mara, of Toomevara, who kept goal for Galway, saved his charge many times over in masterful fashion, giving a grand display.

Limerick went into the second which two great teams fought out a gallant battle."

THE 1936 ALL-IRELAND FINAL.

Limerick beat their old rivals, Kilkenny, 5-6 to 0-3, in the 1936

All-Ireland final. The teams on that occasion were:—

Limerick—P. Scanlan (goal), P. O'Carroll, T. McCarthy, M. Kennedy, Howard, T. Ryan, M. Ryan, J. Mackey, M. Mackey, J. Roche, D. Clohesey, P. McMahon, J. Power.

By SEAMUS O'CEALLAIGH

Kilkenny—J. O'Connell (goal), P. Larkin, P. O'Reilly, P. Blanchfield, P. Byrne, E. Byrne, P. Phelan, L. Meagher, T. Leahy, J. half a changed team, and four goals and a point in seven minutes altered the whole aspect of the game. Fifteen minutes from the end spectators rushed in following an injury to a Galway player. The Connacht men refused to resume when the referee, Mr. Seamus Wrafter, of Birr, refused a request of their captain to put off a Limerick player, alleged to have caused deliberate injury to one of his team.

Galway returned later and tried to clear the pitch but the Limerick players and referee had then left. The scoreboard read at the time of the interruption: Limerick, 4-0; Galway, 2-4.

LIMERICK AWARDED THE MATCH.

The Central Council awarded Limerick the match and suspended Galway for six months.

A Press report of this game said: "Timmy Ryan was great at midfield; it was one of his most magnificent displays. Mick Mackey was, as usual, the bright light of the Limerick fifteen. I have often wondered how the Shannonsiders would fare without him, for undoubtedly he has played more than one man's part in securing many of the big victories the Limerick men are so justly proud of over the past few seasons. A tireless worker, the part he plays in the green and white machine could hardly be over estimated. There were some hard and sharp knocks, more than a little of natural heat, but nothing to mar the fine spirit in

Walsh, M. White, J. Duggan, J. Dunne, M. Power, L. Byrne, Sub.—M. Burke.

"Vigilant," writing in "An Gaedheal," of the game, said:

"The men from the Shannonside fielded a combination of players that beyond all shadow of doubt proved itself to be one of the greatest hurling teams that Ireland has ever seen. It is a great all-round team with a back division that was almost literally unbeatable."

"I have seen and written about all the leading camán contests over a stretch of thirty years, and I can say honestly that I never saw a team better than this year's All-Ireland champions. All honour to Limerick for their superiority, but I honour them even more for the grim determination with which they have brought Limerick right to the forefront."

MASTERLY DISPLAY OF SUPERIORITY.

"True, Limerick have won All-Ireland hurling honours before, but they have never won such honours by such a masterly display of superiority against such formidable opponents."

"I can look back to a Sunday in July, 1913, at Thurles, when Limerick met Cork in a strongly contested Munster championship tie, with Tom Semple as referee."

"Cork won that match in decisive fashion, but I have not forgotten the fierce determination but truly sporting spirit, in which a fine Limerick team fought out the issue to the finish."

"There was luck in the game, too, and Cork had all of it that was going. The Leesiders had a great team with Captain Barry Murphy in charge, and the redoubtable Andy Fitzgerald in goal. The great Jim Kelleher, old Duncourney's star was there too. 'Bowler' Walsh, Connie Sheehan, 'Major' Kennedy, and all the best of a great and big hurling county."

"Mick Feely, of Croom, captained the Limerick lads. Ter Mangan, 'Tyler' Mackey, Sean Carroll, Pat nedy, M. Cross, P. Clohesey, G. Vaughan, Egan Clancy, were among the outstanding men on Limerick's side. 'Limerick' deserved more scores than they got, I remarked to my friend, Seoirse Clancy, who was afterwards martyred for Ireland, whilst Mayor of Limerick."

"We will be back again, and with better luck, Vigilant," was the cheery reply.

"Limerick has had splendid victory since then, but this victory has given the city and county of the Violated Treaty its crowning glory."

"How little we thought that evening of twenty-three years ago when joking with 'Tyler' after the match, when John Power, of Pilltown, then Kilkenny's great goal-keeper, remarked to him: 'You'll be in the game a long time yet, Tyler, and surely the veteran is, by his worthy sons, more in the game today than ever. Long may be flourish.'"

WINNERS OF 20 SENIOR COUNTY MEDALS.

Mick and John Mackey helped Aha ne to victory in five successive county senior football championship finals as under:—

1935—At Rathkeale, October 4th, 1936—Aha ne, 3-2; Abbeyfeale, 1-1.

1936—At Rathkeale, August 15th, 1937—Aha ne, 0-7; Foynes, 0-3.

1937—At Askeaton, May 15th, 1938—Aha ne, 2-3; Glin, 0-8.

1938—At Foynes, April 23rd 1939—Aha ne, 0-2; Abbeyfeale, 0-2.

Re-play at Limerick Gaelic Grounds, August 13th, 1939—Aha ne, 1-9; Abbeyfeale, 1-2.

1939—At Askeaton, May 26th, 1940—Aha ne, 0-1; Glin, nil.

The brothers also figured in the winning of fifteen Limerick senior hurling crowns, so they each have twenty senior county championship medals, which must be a record for individuals, not equalled, to my knowledge, by any other player, since the G.A.A. was established.

John Mackey holds another record in being the only hurler ever to win six National League medals. He also boasts nine Thomond Tournament trophies, laureds not easily secured.

Limerick, seeking their fourth successive National Hurling League title, suffered the first League defeat since Kilkenny beat them in the final of the 1932-3 competition, when they lost to Tipperary, at Thurles, 4-5 to 2-4, in October, 1936.

The newspapers described this "a game worthy of the occasion, and for thrills and spills was equal to the best that the two famous counties have given us."

"Limerick were short three of the team which defeated Kilkenny in the All-Ireland final—Mick and John Mackey and Mick Ryan, the vacancies being filled by J. Toomey, M. Power and D. Givens."

"Holding Limerick to level scoring at the interval Tipperary had done well, but at the change of sides there was little to show that we were to have a sensational finish or that the champions were facing defeat. Limerick went ahead soon after resuming and were leading by three points, when Tipperary turned on the pressure, and two goals in quick succession changed the whole aspect of the game."

THE TEAMS.

The teams were:

Tipperary—J. Butler (goal), D. O'Gorman, J. Connolly, B. Hickey, J. Ryan, J. Maher, W. Wall, J. Cooney, W. Barry, Jimmy Coffey, T. Treacy, T. Doyle, W. O'Donnell, T. Hannon, D. Murphy. Sub.—M. Bourke.

Limerick—P. Scanlan (goal), P. O'Carroll, T. McCarthy, M. Kennedy, M. Cross, P. Clohesey, J. Toomey, T. Ryan, M. Power, D. Givens, J. Power, J. Roche, D. Clohesey, P. McMahon, G. Howard.

Limerick compensated with victories over Laois, 7-1 to 2-4; Waterford, 4-3 to 2-3; Galway, 8-3 to 0-3; Kilkenny, 6-3 to 4-1; Dublin, 4-6 to 0-6; and a draw with Clare, 3-2 apiece; and faced Cork for the final tie, with a win over the Leesiders sufficient to give them their fourth successive League crown.

That game was played at Limerick Gaelic Grounds on April 18th, 1937, and Limerick won 11-6 to 5-1. John Mackey was unable to play in this last match, owing to being injured in the engagement with Clare and Garrett Howrad had earlier announced his retirement after many years sterling service to the national game. The Limerick team against Cork was—P. Scanlan (goal), P. O'Carroll, T. McCarthy, M. Kennedy, M. Cross, P. Clohesey, J. Power, T. Ryan, M. Ryan, D. Givens, M. Mackey, J. Roche, D. Clohesey, P. McMahon, J. McCarthy.

Seven Limerick men—Mick Hickey (goal), T. McCarthy, J. Toomey, M. Kennedy, T. Ryan, Mick Mackey and D. Clohesey—figured on the Munster side that beat Connacht at Ennis, 4-5 to 3-1, in the Railway Cup semi-final. With Connacht that day played T. Hoban, first Mayo hurler to figure on a provincial selection.

THE MUNSTER TEAM.

In the final, in which Munster beat Leinster, 1-9 to 3-1. Mick Mackey captained the winning side, the other Limerick representatives on that occasion being P. Scanlan, T. McCarthy, M. Kennedy, P. Clohesey, T. Ryan, J. Mackey, and P. McMahon.

In all, eleven Shannonside hurlers wore the Munster colours that season.

Limerick won the Ward Cup for the third time, when they beat Kilkenny, 3-5 to 3-3 in London on Whit Monday.

How Limerick lost their Munster and All-Ireland crown in 1937 and regained it in 1940, will be told next week.

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