

# Champions on the defensive at Pairc na nGael Patrickswell and Askeato take to Old Christians and St. Ciarans

The Co. title holders in both grades defend their crowns at Pairc na nGael next Sunday. In hurling, Old Christians challenge Patrickswell and there could be the ingredients of a great match in this meeting. Patrickswell will start strong favourites—as Kilkenny did in the recent Blue Ribband decision—and the grounds for confidence in their ability to work through to the semi-final are as convincing as one could wish for. As a club unit they have performed more than adequately in every engagement over a lengthy period, their displays have been uniformly good and they boast wonderful club spirit. In the six Bennis brothers, the Caseys, the Caseys, they preserve close family ties that have proved of immense benefit to the side. Add to this the splendid goal-keeping of Michael (The Power) and experience of Tony O'Brien and the usefulness of men like Liam Shinnors, Jimmy Shields and John O'Donnell and one can easily appreciate why so many feel they have an outstanding chance of retaining the title they won for the first time and with such great clan last season.

## BOUND TO SWEEP THE DECKS

When Old Christians were formed not so very many years ago many old Gaels maintained their potential was such that they were bound to sweep the decks in both codes must be a short period and in time prove an almost impregnable fortress. The footballers, first time out, fulfilled that prediction and their winning of the County senior crown was a notable achievement.

The first flush was the best and Old Christians have not made their mark to the expected degree since. That is surprising for they undoubtedly have the talent but to date the ability to mould it the right way appears to be missing. That they will succeed eventually must be conceded by any close student of the game. Take the hurlers. They have a classical trio in Bernie Hartigan, Pat Murphy and Eddie Prendeville. Joe Leonard may be handicapped by some superfluous weight but his experience in inter-county ranks is invaluable. Seavalls Cox, Frank O'Dwyer, Pat Doyle, Dan Sherlock and Andy Cogherty, are devoted club men with plenty to offer to any team. They could have match winning minor combinations that boast first-class players in Donal Manning, Gerds Fitzgerald, Jimmy Flanagan, Declan O'Reilly, Michael Hennessy, Matt Grace, Michael Keogh, Gerry McKeown and W. O'Connell. All will have plenty of potential

and it will be time for the other clubs to sit up and take serious notice the day the mentors find what they have been seeking in vain so far.

## PULL THE BEST OUT

Being pitted against the champions could be the challenge that will pull the best from the side on the hurling field. They will flock to Pairc na nGael next Sunday will go there in the expectation of a game in keeping with the reputations involved. Patrickswell will be firm favourites but an Old Christians win could not be rated a sensation. They are undoubtedly there as very strong outsiders.

## TEAM AT ZENITH

Askeato are every bit as firmly entrenched as their hurling counterparts in the football firmament and their recent overwhelming defeat of Treaty-Sarfields mark them a team at their zenith. They have many great footballers, the big majority of whom can claim considerable experience, quite a number boasting plenty of inter-county activity. The stream from juvenile and minor ranks has flowed steadily and uniformly good since most of the under-age teams. They lost a few great players this season and it is no small tribute to the up and coming lads that the future looks so bright and so assured just now.

Conceding all this I still feel Askeato face a very serious challenge on Sunday. St. Ciarans are a group combination drawn from clubs not a hundred miles from the Askeato area. I agree they have not the football of their more distinguished opponents but they can be terrific spurs and they will go all out to upset the night perfect Askeato machine. A machine when it goes out of order is something not readily repaired and that is the danger most of us see for the champions. They should win, but up against unorthodox football allies to earnestness and determination the task is not all that simple. If only for the clash of styles and the close rivalry certain to be in evidence the game should be well worth witnessing.

## Brief bits from other fields

Fedamore won the East Limerick juvenile hurling title with

## Gaeldom & Its Concerns

# NEWS AND VIEWS OF: THE WEEK

By "CAMAN"

## Interesting S.H. fare at Kilmallock

ness and much of the finer arts of the game in a very satisfying win over the 1964 champions, Cappamore.

### VERY FIT

There is no gaining that Adare will be a very fit and well coached side—that has been a characteristic of them since their appearance as Western junior champions two years ago, and in their subsequent triumphant county journey whether Claughaun have the means to offset that is the question mark for answer at Kilmallock on Sunday.

Those who opt for Caherconlish on Sunday will undoubtedly derive much pleasure and plenty of thrills too, from the second meeting of Pallas and Fedamore in the East Limerick hurling cup re-play. Also on the programme is the junior hurling championship clash of South Liberties and Kiltely, for which the former are favoured. They are about as certain, however, as Tobías Eirann's forecast of to-morrow's weather. Put that in your pipe and smoke it!

In last Sunday's National Hurling League Final at Croke Park the Kelleher brothers Brendan and Peter, both of whom played with Murroe before emigrating, were prominent members of the New York side. The annual meeting of the Munster Colleges will be held at Cork this week-end. It is to be hoped that all our Limerick colleges will be represented at same.

When St. Patrick's ran Claughaun very closely in the City Senior Hurling Cup semi-final many openly expressed the opinion that "Saints" would prove the dark horses of the fight for the County Senior crown. Their fine win in the long delayed under 21 County Championship Final of 1965 reinforced that feeling and certainly suggested a wealth of material with the selectors lot a bit confusing and requiring the diplomatic approach.

St. Ita's went into last Sunday's game as underdogs, every bit as much as on the occasion when they ousted the fancied Kilmallock lads. They almost came out winners as the umpires disagreed about a "near thing" in the closing minute of play, and only for referee Steve Cronin was right on the spot to judge for himself the granting of that score, would have left St. Patrick's sitting on the fence.

### BEST RESULT

Perhaps a draw was the best result, taking all things into consideration, but the fans will face the replay in a different frame of mind, and the certainty will be less certain and the doubtful one less so.

St. Patrick's were not the men with a mission we expected them to be and some of their play, particularly in the early stages, was, to say the least, disappointing. The western lads finished the stronger and had more in reserve in the end than their opponents.

The second chance should be taken and it will

CHAMMAN LUIC-CLAS GAEL

FIXTURES