

North Tipperary Senior Hurling Final
Match Programme
1998



Coiste Tiobraid Arann Thuaidh

MacDonagh Park,
Cloughjordan



**Sunday, Sept.
6th 1998**

at 3.30 p.m.

TSB Bank Nenagh
North Tipperary



Senior Hurling Final

Toomevara

v

**Nenagh
Éire Óg**



Reitor: **Michael Cahill**

Clar Oifigiúil
Micheál Ó Briain (Rúnaí)



Today's North Tipp. Finalists



NENAGH ÉIRE ÓG team which defeated Roscrea in the semi-final. Back row, left to right: Con Howard, John Heffernan, Conor O'Donovan, Richie Flannery, Eddie Tucker, Hugh Flannery, Declan O'Meara and John Slattery. Kneeling: Michael Cleary, Declan Bailey, Kevin Tucker, Christy McLoughlin, Robbie Tomlinson, Michael Hackett, and John Kennedy.



TOOMEVARA team which won the North Tipp League. Back, from left: Kevin Kennedy, Terry Dunne, Dermot Brislane, Pdraig Hackett, Martin Cahalan, Michael Murphy, Tony Delaney, Ken Dunne. Front: Tomás Dunne, Paddy O'Brien, George Frend, Aidan Maxwell, Philip Shanahan (capt), Justin Cottrell, Bertie Sherlock, Rory Brislane.

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Fáilte

A dhaoine uaisle, is ábhar áthais agus bróid dom, ar mo shon féin, agus ar son Coiste Thobraid Árann Thuaidh, fáilte ó chroí a fhearadh roimh gach éinne anseo inniu. Is ócáid speisialta dúinn go léir í agus dos na foirne atá ag imirt. Táim ag súil le cluichí iontachta spóirtúila, agus go mbamfidh sibh taitneamh agus spórt as an lá.

On behalf of North Tipperary G.A.A. Board it is my pleasure to welcome all of you to Thomas MacDonagh Park, Cloughjordan for today's games.

In our first game we have for the first time ever in North Tipperary a relegation playoff between neighbours and great rivals Borrisokane and Lorrha, with the loser of the game to be relegated to Intermediate status for 1999.

The senior final brings together Nenagh and Toomevara, two clubs that have played many great games in recent years. Toome will be anxious to retain the Frank McGrath Trophy and add to their league title already won earlier this year, while Nenagh will be hoping that they can take the title they last won in 1993. This pairing has all the ingredients for a wonderful contest, and hopefully you will enjoy a final worthy of the occasion and *whatever* the outcome, it is my hope that this final will compare with the many great games of the past.

I would like to express the board's thanks to the TSB Bank, Nenagh for its generous sponsorship.

I would like to thank all that have helped in the preparations for today's games, MacDonagh Park Committee, Gardai, Order of Malta, the press and the participating club.

The programme for today's games has been compiled by our Youth Officer, Caroline Egan and Liam Hogan, Shannon Rovers, in conjunction with Bord na nOg. I would like to express my appreciation and thanks to them for producing a very fine programme.

My thanks to the referees and clubs of the Division for their help and co-operation during the year and finally to all my fellow officers, but especially to An Rúnaí, Michael O'Brien and An Cisteoir, Michael Nolan who both carry out a huge amount of outstanding work on behalf of the Board.



Donal O Seanachain,

Cathaoirleach, Bord Thiobraid Árann Thuaidh.

Best of Luck to Nenagh Éire Óg

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Clár

2.00 p.m.: **S. H. RELEGATION PLAY-OFF**
Borrisokane v Lorrha

Reitoir: Johnny McDonnell, Roscrea

3.30 p.m. **TSB NENAGH NORTH TIPPERARY**
SENIOR HURLING FINAL
Toomevara (holders) v
Nenagh Éire Óg

Reitoir: Michael Cahill, Kilruane MacDonaghs.

Buiochas

We would like to thank the following who helped compile this programme:

Suppliers of articles:

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Michael O'Brien, North Board Secretary.

Jimmy Minogue, Secretary, Nenagh Éire Óg Club

Eddie Frend, Secretary, Toomevara Club

Karen O'Donoghue, Nenagh Éire Óg

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Signed: Caroline Egan and Liam Hogan, Programme Editors.



Michael Cleary receives the Hubie Hogan Cup from North Tipperary Board Chairman, Billy Ryan, after Nenagh defeated Borrisokane in the 1991 final by 2-12 to 0-13 at Cloughjordan.



Donal Shanahan, North Board Chairman, presenting the Canon Fogarty Cup to Nenagh Éire Óg captain, Con Howard last year.

Today's Final

Toomevara's 27th or Nenagh Eire Og's 6th

The pairing for to-days T.S.B. Bank North Tipperary Senior Hurling Final brings together the two most consistent teams in senior hurling since the nineties began.

Holders Toomevara take on Nenagh Eire Og in what is a repeat of the 1991 North Final, but is also another chapter in the history of Toomevara v Nenagh Eire Og games that always seem to attract much interest whenever the Greyhounds and the Ormond Capital meet.

Between both league and championship this is the fourteenth meeting between the sides, since 1990. Toome lead 9-4 and there has been one draw. While this will be the fifth championship final between the sides (1923,'28,'57,'91) such is the rivalry between them, that since the North Final of 1991 both sides have met in no less than three league finals. The last of these saw Toome defeat Nenagh Eire Og on May 18th, 1997. Toome and Nenagh met in the 3rd round of this years league when the former won by 3-11 to 3-08 at Toomevara just four months ago.

FOUR PREVIOUS FINALS

As stated above, both sides have met in four North Senior Hurling Finals. The first one was in 1923, when Toome had a thirty point win. Five years later the margin wasn't quite as big, but Toome won again against a Nenagh & De Wets selection. The final score read, Toomevara 6-3; Nenagh/De Wets 5-0.

It was on to 1957 before they met in a North Final again. This time it proved to be a historic win for Eire Og. In a low scoring final, Eire Og won by 5-5 to 4-5 at Nenagh's MacDonagh Park.

Toomevara's magic era of the early sixties soon followed with wins in '58,'60,'61,'62 and little seemed to suggest that it would be twenty nine years before Toome would win a North Final again. That they did, and it was Eire Og who were the position. The final needed a replay and after a 0-12 to 0-12 draw, Toomevara's long await victory ended on 2-11 to 2-7.

Since then both Toomevara and Nenagh have shared five North titles with Toome winning three. They defeated Kilruane MacDonagh's and Borris-Ileigh twice in 1994, '95,'97 respectively. Nenagh Eire Og accounted for Lorrha and Moneygall in '92,'93.

Paths to the Final

To get to to-day's final both sides came through the winners section. Toome began the defence of their crown in June against Borrisokane at Cloughjordan. But for the resilience of Tommy Dunne, Toomevara might have ended in the losers group section. After a bye in the quarter final the holder faced Portroe in the semi final. Leading by 0-8 to 0-6 at half time, Toome let lose to destroy Portroe by 4-17 to 1-8. Kevin Kennedy was the hero, scoring 3-0 into the bargain.

On the other side of the coin Nenagh Eire Og had a facile win over Roscrea. Next the opposition was Borris-Ileigh in the quarter final. John's Kennedy's accuracy and a half back line of Richie Flannery, Hugh Flannery and Michael Cleary gave Nenagh the edge.

On to the semi finals, with Roscrea (losers group winners) the opposition once again.

Toomevara's hard battle to win Senior Final

KILRUANE'S GREAT EFFORT NARROWLY FAILS HOLDERS MAKE IT THREE-IN-A-ROW

Toomevara 4-9 - Kilruane McDonagh 5-4

Over the well-trodden road to Toomevara goes the North Tipperary senior hurling title for the third year in succession and the fourth time in five years. But far from familiarity breeding contempt, this latest triumph must be one of the most cherished of all, for it was made safe only after the defending champions had over-come an eleven points deficit at the interval, repelled the challengers' second-half effort to get on top and then strode out in the final minutes for victory. Rarely in the past can the champions have been called upon to travel a harder, more arduous road to success. It was only in the last strenuously exacting moments of a dramatic and pulsating second half that any Toomevara man could be certain of victory.

Toomevara won this game because they are a team of rare proficiency, but Kilruane could have won and a draw would have satisfied anyone without affiliation to either side. From first to last, there was never a dull moment in this game, which was conducted at a stamina devouring pace and with a fervour and zeal that was breath-taking.

Although defeat was their portion, Kilruane have no cause to be downcast. They proved that they are back, rather than returning, to the big time and the manner in which they took their early scores won the admiration of all present.

It was Kilruane who hurled their hearts out, trying earnestly to regain the title they last held three years ago. But it was Toomevara the cuter, classier and the more experienced side, who took the honours. On reflection, they deserved them. They were the better team when it came to the push and they rallied marvellously in a thrill-packed second half.

Toomevara deserved their triumph, if for no other reason than they fought back like real champions, after they had been pummelled by a Kilruane side that had unexpectedly swept them off their feet in the first half.

Conditions were anything but good for the game. Heavy rain fell during the proceeding match and continued during the senior final. Yet, the players succeeded in overcoming these difficulties to treat the 3,000 attendance to a rip-roaring hour of hard shoulder-to-shoulder hurling, with no quarter asked or given. At all times, the hurling was hard and fearless, now and again a little ruthless, but overall there was very little rancour.

Four minutes from time, substitute Paddy Cummins broke out to the right and put Toomevara in the lead with a point. Two minutes later, Matt O'Gara burst up the right wing and from out on the touch-line swung over a great point. Kilruane made a brave effort to save the day, but time

had run out and Toomevara were champions for yet another year.

Other good displays on the winning side came from Jim McDonnell, John Hough, though not as prominent as usual, Roger Ryan, Frankie Ryan, Matt O'Gara, Tom Shanahan and substitute, Paddy Cummins.

Toomevara scorers were: P. Shanahan 3-0, Tom Ryan 0-5, Frankie Ryan, 1-1, J Hough 0-1, P Cummins, 0-1, M O'Gara 0-1. Kilruane scorers were: H Tooher 3-0, G Hogan 1-1, C Moloughney 1-0, J Gibson 0-2, L Gaynor 0-1.

THE SCORING

In the first minute, Kilruane took the lead. Ger Hogan broke down the centre and Hugh Tooher crashed home a goal. Toomevara struck back and John Hough, after a short run, had a point.

Back came Kilruane and inside five minutes, they had their second goal on the scoreboard as Ger Hogan whipped a ground ball to the net from 25 yards out.

Sean Williams had a great chance for Kilruane but drove wide. Tooher had another goal for Kilruane and Len Gaynor added a point from a free 60 yards out.

Hogan was wide for Kilruane before Frankie Ryan reduced arrears with a Toomevara point. A switch on the Toomevara team brought Phil Shanahan to centre-forward and Denis Cuddy to full-forward. John Hough also moved to mid-field with Jimmy Donovan right half forward and Stephen Randles in the corner.

Kilruane swept back on the attack and a shot by Liam Tierney went whistling by the near upright. Again the challengers came back. Hugh Tooher crossed the ball from the left, across in front of the goalmouth and Charlie Moloughney knocked it into the back of the Toomevara net.

Kilruane were well on top at this stage. Jimmy Gibson pointed a free. Hogan added a point from play and then came the best score of the game as Tooher doubled on a pass from Tom Moloughney to crash home a great goal.

In a Toomevara attack, a bout of passing between P. Shanahan and Tom Ryan ended in the latter scoring a point. At the other end, a great drive by Tom Moloughney went narrowly wide. Toomevara next forced a 70 which John Hough dropped in the Kilruane goalmouth. The ball was only partially cleared and Tom Ryan got possession to point.

With almost the last stroke of this half, Phil Shanahan had Toomevara's first goal. The centre-forward got possession 20 yards out, feinted for a shot with the left but turned right and cracked home a great goal. Almost immediately the half time whistle went and the score stood: Kilruane 5-3 - Toomevara 1-4.

SECOND HALF

On the restart, Toomevara went on the attack but Tom Ryan drove an easy free wide. In another attack, Frankie Ryan got possession, raced from left to right, angled out and cracked home Toomevara's second goal.

Tom Ryan pointed three frees in succession and Phil Shanahan had a goal to narrow the gap to two points. Again Toomevara attacked and again Shanahan was on the spot to score their fourth goal and give them the lead for the first time.

Tom Moloughney was short with a Kilruane free but the ball went to Hogan who was slow and a great chance was missed. Another free to Kilruane was missed by Gibson before finally they got on level terms when Gibson made no mistake with another free.

Ten minutes left for play and the sides were level. For the next six minutes, play went from end to end, each side trying desperately hard for the winning score. With four minutes left for play, Paddy Cummins broke out to the right and sent over a point. Two minutes later, Matt O'Gara raced up to the right wing and from near the side line, added another point.

Kilruane made a last desperate effort. Gibson sent a free to Des Gaynor, but the centre-field

man's shot was cleared and shortly after the full-time whistle went.

Toomevara: R Mounsey (goal), M Hassett, W Donovan, J McDonnell, M O'Gara, N Williams, T Shanahan, T Ryan, S Randles, J Hough, D Cuddy, F Ryan, R Ryan, P Shanahan, J Donovan. Sub: P Cummins for Randles.

Kilruane McDonagh: M Ryan (goal), L White, P Ryan, J Williams, S Hyland, J Gibson, L Gaynor, D Gaynor, M Murphy, L Tierney, G Hogan, C Moloughney, S Williams, H Tooher, T Moloughney. Subs: M Fahy for C Moloughney, J McCarthy for Murphy.

Referee: D. Nealon (Youghalarra).

1998 T.S.B. North Tipperary Senior Hurling Championship Scoring Charts

Pos.	Player	Club	Score	Frees	65's	Total	No. of Games
1	Trevor Fletcher	Roscrea	2-25	(0-18)		31	5
2	John Kennedy	Nenagh Eire Og	0-29	(0-15)	3 x 65	29	3
3	Conor Stakelum	Borris-Ileigh	2-19	(0-13)		25	3
4	Mark O'Leary	Kilruane MacD.	2-18	(0-9)		24	4
5	{ Pauric Hogan	Borrisokane	1-16	(1-9)		19	3
	{ Donal Hogan	Roscrea	5-4			19	5
6	{ John Madden	Lorrha	1-14	(1-10)		17	2
	{ Adrian Hogan	Borrisokane	1-14	(1-8)		17	4
7	Liam Sheedy	Portroe	2-10	(0-2)		16	3
	{ Barry O'Driscoll	Portroe	0-16	(0-10)		16	3
	{ John Doughan	Moneygall	0-16	(0-11)		16	3
8	{ Kevin Kennedy	Toomevara	4-2			14	2
	{ John Carroll	Roscrea	4-2	(3-0)		14	4
9	{ Ken Dunne	Toomevara	0-12	(0-8)	1 x 65	12	
	{ Ml. Hackett	Nenagh Eire Og	4-0			12	3
10	{ Kevin Tucker	Nenagh Eire Og	1-8			11	3
	{ Brian Gaynor	Kilruane MacD.	0-11	(0-5)	3 x 65	11	3

TOOMEVARA SCORERS

Kevin Kennedy	4-2.
Ken Dunne	0-12 (0-8 F) 1 x 65.
Thomas Dunne	1-4 (0-2 F).
Tony Delaney	0-3 (0-3 frees).
Denis Kelly	1-0.
Ml. Bevens	0-2.
Terry Dunne	0-2.
Paul McGrath	0-1.
Paddy O'Brien	0-1.
Pat King	0-1

NENAGH EIRE OG SCORERS

John Kennedy	0-29 (0-15F) 3 x 65.
Ml. Hackett	4-0.
Kevin Tucker	1-8.
Declan O'Meara	1-5.
Robbie Tomlinson	0-3.
Eddie Tucker	0-3.
Ml. Cleary	0-2.
Con Howard	0-1.
Rory Flannery	0-1.
John Slattery	0-1.

Player Profile:

Con Howard, Nenagh Éire Óg

Name: Con Howard

Age: 26 years.

Height: 5ft 11inches

Occupation: Pre-Cast Concrete Foreman

List of Honours with Schools: Defeated Harty Cup finalists
Fitzgerald and Croke Cup medals

List of Honours with Club: County U-21 medal 1993 hurling
North Minor medal 1989 hurling
North and county U-16 hurling and football 1988
North Senior hurling 1992, 1993
County Senior hurling 1995
North Senior league 1995
County Senior League 1997

Influences on Hurling: Martin Slattery, CBS
Liam Heffernan
John Tucker

Advice to young players: Listen to your coaches; train and practice as often as possible.

Hopes for future: To stay injury free, and be successful at club level.



12 North Finals

Nenagh Éire Óg have played in twelve North Tipperary Senior Hurling Championships finals, winning five.

The full list of their appearances is as follows:

1915	Nenagh	3-03	Moneygall	3-02
1923	Nenagh	1-02	Toomevara	7-00
1928	Nenagh De Wets	5-00	Toomevara	6-03
1939	Nenagh	1-03	Roscrea	8-03
1949	St. Mary's (Nenagh)	4-04	Roscrea	4-07
1959	Éire Óg, Nenagh	5-05	Toomevara	4-05
1964	Éire Óg, Nenagh	5-12	Roscrea	2-08
1982	Éire Óg, Nenagh	0-17	Roscrea	3-08
1984	Éire Óg, Nenagh	3-09	Lorrha	4-11
1991	Éire Óg, Nenagh	0-12	Toomevara	0-12
Replay	Éire Óg, Nenagh	2-07	Toomevara	2-11
1992	Nenagh Éire Óg	1-18	Lorrha	0-08
1993	Nenagh Éire Óg	0-14	Moneygall	0-12

Best of luck to Eire Og

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BEST OF LUCK TO EIRE OG

North Tipperary Senior Hurling Roll of Honour

Pre-Parish Rule - 1901 - 34.

Toomevara 17:	1910, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31.
Lahorna De Wets 7:	1901, 02, 03, 04, 06, 07, 08.
Lorrha 3:	1905, 14, 24.
Kilbarron/Kildangan 1:	1934.
Borrisokane 1:	1933.
Newport 1:	1932.
Nenagh 1:	1915.
Youghalarra 1:	1909.

ROLL OF HONOUR AFTER PARISH RULE 1935 - 97

Roscrea 15:	1936, 37, 39, 41, 42, 45, 49, 54, 63, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 80.
Borris-Ileigh 12:	1947, 50, 51, 52, 53, 55, 72, 73, 76, 81, 83, 88.
Kilruane MacDonaghs 11:	1940, 44, 59, 65, 77, 78, 79, 85, 86, 87, 90.
Toomevara 9:	1946, 58, 60, 61, 62, 91, 94, 95, 97.
Lorrha 5:	1948, 56, 66, 84, 89.
Nenagh Eire Og 4:	1957, 64, 92, 93.
Newport 2:	1935, 96.
Kildangan 2:	1938, 43.
Moneygall 1:	1975.
Silvermines 1:	1974.

North Board Meeting

In 1907, a special meeting of the North Tipperary G.A.A. was held in the town hall, Nenagh. Mr. F.R. Moloney presided and the remaining games of the first round were Lahorna De Wets v Youghalarra and Lorrha v Curreeney at Nenagh, on 6th. October. Mr. P. McGuinness, referee.

Rearcross v Nenagh Shamrocks at Templederry on October 20th. - Mr. Michael Kelly, referee.

Toomevara v Templederry at Kilnafinch, October 27th. P. McGuinness, referee.

Borrisokane v Terryglass at Kilbarron, (Oct. 20th). Ref. Peter Carroll,

N.B. The usual monthly meeting (first Sunday of each month) was to be held on Oct. 6th at 5 p.m.

GATE RECEIPTS

The gate receipts for the 1946 North Final between Toomevara and Roscrea netted £280 which was a record at the time.



Toomevara selection 1913: Front row, left to right: Billy Kelly, Jim Murphy, Hugh Shelly, Bud Keffe. Second row: Ned Guilmartin, Jack Harty, Frank McGrath, Wedger Meagher, Stephen Hackett. Back row: Jack Kennedy, Jack O'Meara, Ned Cawley, Jack Raleigh, Mick Ryan, Jim O'Meara, Paddy Kennedy.



Thomas Dunne, Toomevara and Tipperary being presented with his All-Star last year while Taoiseach Bertie Ahern looks on.

The Guardian Saturday, August 26th, 1961:

When the Frank McGrath Cup was first presented

Before presenting the Frank McGrath Cup to John Hough, the captain of the successful Toomevara team, Mr. Seamus Ryan, N.T., Chairman of the North Tipperary Board, said it was a privilege to present this trophy for the first time to John Hough, the old warrior of Toomevara, in the great victory his team had in winning the Cup. It was a good game, a good final.

Borrisokane fought their best but were not good enough to beat Toome. Borrisokane would go forward to the County Championship proper and they would have an opportunity of meeting the champions from South Tipperary and everyone here would be behind them, as they would be behind Toomevara to retain the Co. Tipperary Championship again.

Mr. Ryan said he regretted that the donor of the Cup, Mr. Frank McGrath, was unable to be present. It was only fitting that it should go to his old club that he had played with for so many years. He congratulated both teams on providing such a fine display.

Mr. Ryan then handed over the Cup to John Hough amidst loud hand-clapping. John Hough, the Toomevara captain, said he wished to thank Mr. Ryan for his very generous remarks about both teams.

Proceeding, he said that the presentation of the Frank McGrath Cup gave them the spirit they had in going out to win this championship for the first time because of the great honour and glory Frank McGrath brought to the village of Toomevara, to Tipperary, and to Ireland. He knew that Frank McGrath would feel that it was more welcome to him that the Cup should go for the first time to his old team, the "Greyhounds."

The Toomevara captain added they regretted that Mr. McGrath was not present in person to present the Cup to his old club. They complimented Borrisokane on their fine spirit of sportsmanship and on the fine game they put up and said that their turn would come in time to win the Cup. He added that he hoped both teams would do honour to the division in the County Tipperary Championship. He called for three cheers for Borrisokane which was heartily responded to.



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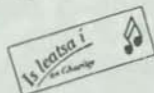
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Matt O'Gara

Toomevara & Tipperary

How ironic it was that the emergence of a young star should coincide with the resurgence of Toomevara senior hurling team, that went on to win four North titles in five years. That young star was Matt O'Gara, who along with Neill Williams and Tom Shanahan formed a formidable Toome half back line in a five year period, 1958 – '63. That young star went further a field by gaining a place on the Tipperary senior hurling team which would win two All-Ireland's in senior, 1961, '62, only to have his career curtailed due to an eye injury. One wonders how many more All-Ireland medals he might have won when you see that Tipperary contested four more All-Ireland's in the sixties.

COUNTY CAREER

Matt O'Gara first wore the county jersey in 1955. That year Tipp won the Munster and All-Ireland minor titles. It was the premier county's 3rd All-Ireland in four years and Matt came on as a replacement in the final against Galway.

One year later Matt played at right wing back for the Junior team only to see his side lose to Kerry in the Munster semi-final, on July 8th at Thurles. It would be five more years before Matt would play championship hurling again for his county. So, in 1961 he became an eleventh hour replacement for Kieran Carey against Galway in that years Munster championship. There was a major reshuffle in the subs list for that game as many of his club team mates were dropped from the Tipp sub bench. It was a strange decision for the selectors as Tipp had won the league in the spring. However, every cloud has a silver lining and Matt was brought on to the panel (because of his performances at club level) alongside John Keogh, Roger Mounsey, Sean McLoughlin and Phil Murray of Nenagh.

He lined out at right half back in each of his games against Galway, Cork (Munster Final) before he played his first All-Ireland (1961) against Dublin, where he lined out at mid field. Tipp won that day and O'Gara had two All-Ireland medals in his possession.

A third was to come in 1962, but things might have been 'o' so different had his club mate Matt Hassett not received a broken finger after Tipperary's drawn Munster semi-final against Limerick. Matt was not even listed as a sub, much to the consternation of many followers. Well, in the replay he regained his place and went on to win another Munster medal at the expense of Waterford. Another All-Ireland appearance, against Wexford this time which ended in Matt going off injured during the game. Tipp won again and it was medal number three for the O'Gara household. Surely more medals were to follow, however, an illustrious career was cut short by injury.

NORTH MEDALS

Matt O'Gara first tasted success at Minor level in 1954 when Toomevara defeated Kilruane MacDonagh's 3-11 to 4-5. One year later Toome minors failed to Nenagh Eire 'Og in the final but alas, Toomevara Intermediates won the Inter grade after defeating Burgess in the final.

It was a double celebration for the O'Gara household as Gurtagarry claimed the

junior championship also. Toomevara were going through a transition period with a number of players been transferred to their clubs outside of the division and county.

Matt O'Gara played senior championship with Toome in 1956, against Kildangan. There was no success in store and so one year later Matt played in his first senior North Final against Nenagh Eire Og. Alas, defeat was his and Toomevara's lot.

The next five years were to be fruitful ones for both Matt and Toome. There were to be four North Final wins against Kilruane (3times) and Borrisokane and a sequence of twenty-one games with only one defeat (i.e. 1959 North Final v Kilruane). Matt O'Gara lined out in his familiar right half back position. Sure if four North Senior Championship medals was enough, then lets not forget his county championship medal of 1960. That was a success that would help mould a Tipperary senior team for the next decade or so.

Nowadays, Matt O'Gara lives in Nenagh and over the years he has helped the club in Juvenile affairs. His sons Liam, Matthew, John and Tom all played for Nenagh Eire Og. He has three daughter, Helen, Josephine and Michelle, and he is married to Eileen Small from Thurles. Matt still works with Irish Rail or C.I.E. as it was known before hand. Golf is another sport that is close to Matt's heart which he plays regularly. However, for many followers of the game of hurling the memories of Matt O'Gara fighting for Toomevara and Tipperary's endeavours on the right flank are instilled long in the memory.

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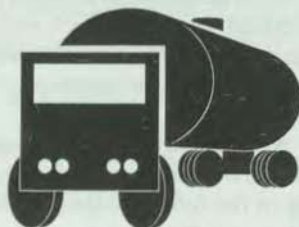
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21 Championship Meetings

TOOMEVARA V NENAGH EIRE OG 1950'S TO 1990'S

Between 1953 and 1997, both Toomevara and Nenagh Eire Og have met on, no fewer than 21 times in North Senior Hurling Championship. The score stands at 11 - 8 in Toomevara's favour, while there has been two draws in which Toome' emerged victorious.

In that period both sides met in two North Finals 1957 and 1991, plus they met in four North semi's.

The results of the games are as follows:

TOOMEVARA v NENAGH

1950'S:

Year	Date	Teams	Venue
1953	May 24 - Losers Group	Toomevara 4-6 - Eire Og 5-5	Nenagh
1956	Aug. 5th - Area 2 Final	Toomevara 6-2 - Eire Og 4-8	Nenagh
	Aug. 17 (R) Area 2 Final	Toomevara 5-11 - Eire Og 3-2	Nenagh
1957	Aug 4th North Final	Toomevara 4-5 - Eire Og 5-5	Nenagh
1988	July 20th North Semi-Final	Toomevara 6-7 - Eire Og 2-4	Roscrea.

1960'S:

1960	June 26, Area 3 Final	Toomevara 2-12 - Eire Og 3-6	Borrisoleigh
1961	June 18th Area 2 Final	Toomevara 2-9 - Eire Og 2-5	Borrisoleigh
1962	Aug. 12th North Semi-Final	Toomevara 5-9 - Eire Og 3-5	Roscrea
1969	May 11th., Rd. 1	Toomevara 3-14 - Eire og 3-4	Cloughjordan

1970'S:

1970	June 14th., Losers Group	Toomevara 3-9 - Eire Og 6-3	Cloughjordan
1971	Aug. 22nd., Round 5	Toomevara 7-10 - Eire Og 4-6	Nenagh
1975	June 15 - Round 4	Toomevara 4-12 - Eire Og 2-2	Cloughjordan
1976	May, Round 2	Toomevara 2-7 - Eire Og 3-7	Cloughjordan
1979	July 7th., Round 5	Toomevara 0-10 - Eire Og 1-16	Borrisokane

1980'S:

1985	May 26, Round 3	Toomevara 1-5 - Eire Og 2-4	Roscrea
1986	Aug 3., Semi-Final	Toomevara 1-17 - Eire Og 0-9	Cloughjordan

1990'S:

1991	Sept. 22, North Final	Toomevara 0-12 - Nenagh Eire Og 0-12	Cloughjordan
	Sept 29, Replay	Toomevara 2-11 - Nenagh E. Og 2-7	Cloughjordan



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An inspired Éire Óg (Nenagh) take third title

Éire Óg 5-12 – Roscrea 2-8

North Tipperary Senior Hurling Champions, Roscrea, were sent crashing from their throne at McDonagh Park, Nenagh, on Sunday, when they were most deservedly and decisively beaten by an inspired Éire Óg team that surged triumphantly on to take their first senior hurling crown since 1957.

Éire Óg's form was a revelation and must have astonished even the most optimistic of their own followers among the attendance of 3,800. From first to last they hurled with a daring, dashing will to win and made a mockery of those who had doubted their ability.

Many felt that Éire Óg would make a good fight of it, but only a good fight; their own fervent supporters said they would win, but who expected to see Roscrea, on the crest of the wave, fold up to the tune of 5-12 to 2-8. Éire Óg reached undreamed of heights in the opening ten minutes, and the holders had no answer to their brilliant first-time hurling. If this brilliance dimmed somewhat later, their determination never faltered and the fact that they were going as strong at the finish as at the start was a tribute to their trainer, Garda Jim Hughes.

It was a colourful scene as the teams, with Éire Óg in light blue and Roscrea in their familiar red jerseys, paraded over the green sward of McDonagh Park in the late September sunshine behind the Nenagh C.B.S. flageolet band. The pitch was in perfect trim and a credit to the groundsman, Mr. Jack Roberts who had put so much work into it the previous week in preparation for the big day.

GREAT START

Roscrea won the toss and Éire Óg were set to play into the town goals. The Nenagh team were the first to attack and from a line ball out on the left Mick Burns centred beautifully but the ball was cleared and Roscrea raced into the attack. From Francis Loughnane's drive, Johnny McGrath, pulling first time in the air, drove the ball downfield. Back came the holders and Mickey Nolan raced down the centre to drive over their first point.

Hardly had the cheers of the Roscrea supporters died away when Gerry Quinlan brought Éire Óg supporters to their feet as he broke his way past two defenders, pushed the ball up to his full-forward line and Oliver Tucker was on hand to turn it into the Roscrea net. Éire Óg were hurling as if their very lives depended on it and Roscrea reeled backwards as the side in the light blue jerseys again went on the attack and Terry Moloney, with a great effort, hammered the ball to the net for the second time.

GREAT GOAL

Michael Kearns tried to work his way through but was held and from the free Moloney drove the ball high and straight between the posts and minutes later Pdraig Kennedy sent over a great point from way out on the left wing. In a Roscrea attack Connie Cleere saved well from John Dillon and McGrath cleared up-field and then came the greatest goal of the game as Michael Kearns rounded Niall Heffernan bore down on the Roscrea goals and with a left-handed drive gave Leo Dooley no chance whatever with a ball that rocketted into the top of the net, and unbelievably the Nenagh team were ahead by 3-3 to 0-1 with less than nine minutes of play gone.

STRUCK TOP FORM



Éire Óg, Nenagh, 1964 North champions. Back row: John Lalor (Chairman, Éire Óg), John Starr, Oliver Tucker, Philip Murray, Sean Duignan, Gerry Quinlan, Paddy Kearns, Michael Kearns, Jimmy McCarthy, Tony Tierney, C. Morgan, Denis Cahalan, Johnny McGrath, Martin O'Connor. Front: Terry Moloney, Adrian Ayres, Padraig Kennedy, Mick Byrnes capt., Phil Hennessy, Connie Cleere, Eddie O'Donnell, Michael Gleeson, Eamon O'Meara, Billy Shoer



Nenagh Éire Óg scholarship winning team 1968. Front row: Brian Chadwick, Gerry Ryan. Second row: Donal O'Halloran, Neilly Corbett, John O'Donoghue (capt), Bobby Shoer, Connie Whelan, Tom O'Donoghue. Third row: Sean Slattery, Martin O'Connor, Paddy Bourke, Paddy McGrath, Jim Ryan, B. Murphy (Players-Willis sponsors), Jack White. Back row: Billy McNamara, Seamus McCarthy, Brian Fagan, Anthony Fagan, Paul Scroope, Joey McCullagh, RIP.

After Kearns's goal the Nenagh team again got back on the attack and forced a 70 that Leo Dooley saved and cleared up-field and Francis Loughnane scored the holders second point. A free to Éire Óg was pointed by Moloney and then a drive by Kearns went wide. Dooley saved a shot from Adrian Ayres before Moloney chalked up goal number four for the still rampant Nenagh team, as he connected with a cross by Padraig Kennedy.

Loughnane kept Roscrea hopes alive with a point, and at the other end Kennedy was wide for Éire Óg, their third and last wide of the first half. Roscrea began to come more into the game, and Johnny McGrath swept the ball almost off the toes of the holder's full-forward, John Dillon, and out of play. Roscrea had their fourth score when Nolan took a pass from Barney Hogan to swing over a point. Hogan moved back to midfield to partner Mick Minogue with Pat Dynan moving to the full-forward line.

Again Moloney was on the mark with a point from a free for Éire Óg and after Dooley had saved a shot by Tony Tierney, the Nenagh team had three points in succession, the first from a long-range free by Mick Burns and the remaining two coming from Ayres and Kennedy. Roscrea had a chance from a 21 yards free but Loughnane's shot at goal was saved, and a row developed near the Nenagh goalmouth. The holder's were given a second 21 yards free and on this occasion Loughnane drove over a point, and seconds later the half-time whistle went to leave Éire Óg ahead by 4-7 to 0-5.

ROSCREA CHANGES

For the second half Roscrea completely re-arranged their back division. Kieran Carey took over at centre-back with Pat Dynan on his right and Patsy Roland on his left. Mick Hogan moved to full back, Owen Killoran to left corner-back. Jimmy Carroll, who had come on as a substitute for Niall Heffernan, was now up in the full-forward line.

Minutes after the restart Éire Óg came very near to increasing their lead as Michael Kearns again rounded his opponent and fired in a shot that hit Leo Dooley on the shoulder and went out for a 70 which Burns drove to the left of the posts. The ball was knocked back into play and an Éire Óg player took a quick shot that went wide. The Nenagh team increased their lead when Kennedy whipped over a point and Roscrea came back for a similar score by Nolan.

Kearns was fouled as he tried to work his way through the Roscrea defence and from the free Moloney was again on the target for a point. Roscrea were in command for a period but the Éire Óg defence was equal to all demands on it. Finally the holders got through for a goal they richly deserved as a Nenagh defender blundered and Jimmy Carroll drove the ball to the net. The holders had a great chance from a 21 yards free but Jimmy Carroll missed his stroke and on the second attempt off the ground drove the ball wide.

Éire Óg had been playing seconds to the holders for quite a spell but now began to fight their way back on top. Kearns, who had moved to the half-forward line in a switch with Ayres, won possession in the middle of the field, broke away and flicked out a pass to the unmarked Kennedy who promptly slammed it between the posts for another point. Minutes later the Nenagh team scored again, Ayres sending over a great point from out near the sideline.

Play was scrappy at this stage and each side had a number of wides. Hogan reduced arrears for the holders with a point and when Loughnane was fouled the same player duly pointed the free. The Nenagh team were four clear goals ahead at this stage, and this was increased to five as Ayres connected with a cross by Tucker and slammed the ball to the net. The crowd was streaming from the grounds as Moloney pointed another Éire Óg free, and then in the last minute Loughnane, raced through to crash home Roscrea's second goal.

Éire Óg's scores came from: T. Moloney (2-5), A. Ayres (1-2), P. Kenendy (0-4), M. Kearns (1-0), O. Tucker (1-0), M. Burns (0-1). Roscrea scorers were: F. Loughnane (1-3), J. Carroll (1-0), B. Hogan (0-2), M. Nolan (0-2), J. Dillon (0-1).

Éire Óg: C. Cleere (goal), C. Morgan, J. McGrath, E. O'Donnell, M. Burns (capt.), P. Murray, P. Kearns, P. Hennessey, T. Tierney, A. Ayres, G. Quinlan, P. Kennedy, M. Kearns, T. Moloney, O. Tucker.

Roscrea: L. Dooley (goal), M. Hogan, K. Carey, N. Heffernan, C. Murphy, P. Roland, O. Killoran, P. Dynan (capt.), M. Minogue, S. Carroll, M. Nolan, F. Loughnane, B. Hogan, J. Dillon, D. Moloney. Sub: J. Carroll for Heffernan.

Referee: M. Carey (Ballinahinch).

MURPHY CUP

From 1938 the Murphy Cup was first presented to the North Tipp S.H. champions. Toomevara's name was inscribed on the Murphy Cup for the first time in 1946 after Toomevara defeated Roscrea by 6-7 to 2-4. The then North Board chairman, Rev. E. Maxwell, C.C., called on the Very Rev. Dr. Maxwell, St. Flannan's College, Ennis to present the cup to Toomevara captain, Dan Kennedy.

HUBIE HOGAN, REFEREE

Match referee for the Toomevara v Nenagh Éire Óg ten goal quarter-final tie which was played at Nenagh on August 12th 1956. Éire Óg 4-8; Toomevara 6-2 was the final score.

Wishing both teams the best of luck

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1957 North Final

NENAGH ÉIRE ÓG 5-5, TOOMEVARA 4-5

Éire Óg, Nenagh captured the North Tipperary Senior Hurling Championship title for the club's second time, when they defeated Toomevara at Nenagh's MacDonagh Park. A sea of jubilant Éire Óg supporters bedecked in red and white carried many of their heroes and their captain, Billy O'Brien, to the presentation area, where they would meet North Board chairman, Jim Ryan.

When Billy O'Brien received the Murphy Cup, thus ensuring that the Ormond capital would bridge a gap of forty two years to when they last won the North title in 1915.

Toomevara began in splendid fashion before they opened a three point lead. Johnnie McGrath goaled a twenty one yard free. John Hogan soon followed with another goal, with Toomevara pointing in the interim. Toomevara regained the lead through two goals from Phil Shanahan and Stephen Guerins. Éire Óg dominated the last five minutes of the half, without scoring. Half time score: Toomevara 2-4, Éire Óg 2-2.

Éire Óg's late first half promise turned into gold early in the second half. In the tenth minute Johnnie McGrath goaled again from a twenty one yard free. He followed this up with a point, as did Billy O'Brien, before John Hogan added two goals. Toomevara fought back with two goals, one from a goalmouth melee and the other from Stephen Guerins before John McGrath sealed the issue with a pointed free.

Full time score: Éire Óg 5-5, Toomevara 4-5.

Referee: Hubie Hogan, Lorrha.

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Lorrha senior hurling team 1998. Back row: John Madden, Barry Moran, Padraig Madden, Gerry Sullivan, Ken Hogan, John McIntyre, Trevor Hogan, James O'Meara. Front: Cathal McIntyre, Michael Kinsella, Stephen Hogan, Pat Kennedy, Noel Hogan, Aidan McIntyre, Tom Madden.



Borrisokane senior hurling team 1998: Back row: John Egan, Dermot Murphy, Michael Heenan, Mark Tooher, John McKenna, Vincent McKenna, Niall Slevin, Owen Cleary, Front: Barry Gohery, Owen Larkin, Paul Darcy, Padraig Hogan, Adrian Hogan, Jim McLoughlin, Tadhg Slevin.

Minor hurling final 1955

NENAGH ÉIRE ÓG 5-5, TOOMEVARA 4-6

Nenagh Éire Óg regained the North Minor Hurling Championship of 1955, which they lost to Toomevara the previous year, when at MacDonagh Park, Nenagh they defeated Toomevara 5-5 to 4-6.

Toome led by 1-5 to 1-1 at half time, and as they stretched into a seven-point lead because of an early second half goal. Man of the match was Éire Óg's Kieran McDonnell who was to play in goals for the first time.

Toomevara, who had the services of Borris-Ileigh minor players, were well served by county minors Sean Warren, Matt O'Gara and Joe Small.

Éire Óg's county representatives were Mick Burns and Michael Gilmartin.

NENAGH ÉIRE ÓG: K. McDonnell, P. McLoughlin, S. Murray, P. Kearns, M. Burns, D. Reynolds, G. Irwin, S. Duignan, F. Dempsey, T. Tierney, M. Gilmartin, N. O'Meara, P. Kennedy, H. Power, E. McDonnell. Subs: P. Gleeson for Dempsey; G. Kevin for Gleeson.

TOOMEVARA: R. Mounsey, P. Hennessy, S. Ryan, L. Cummins, P. Loughnane, S. Warren, P. Delaney, M. O'Gara, M. Bevans, J. Kenny, J. Small, J. Donovan, G. Brereton, T. O'Gara, F. Ryan.

U-16 HURLING

A number of U-16 hurlers from both Nenagh Éire Óg and Toomevara were included in the North Tipperary team to play Mid Tipperary in an arranged challenge game back in 1988. Those included were Derek Conroy, Fergal Hynes, Geroid Cleary, Mark Sheahan, Con Howard, John Kennedy, Eddie Tucker and Cyril Bailey from Nenagh Éire Óg. On the Toomevara side there was Francis Kennedy and Philip Shanahan.

ÉIRE ÓG IN 10 GOALS THRILLER

Back in 1973 both Nenagh Éire Óg and Lorrha produced a ten goal thriller in the fourth round of the North Tipperary SHC. The game which was played at Borrisokane saw former goalkeeper Tony Tierney (an eleventh hour substitute) score 3-1 at full forward. Another late replacement Joe Rice scored his side's opening goal. Nenagh Éire Óg won by 6-8 to 4-12.

WIN AT LAST

After defeats to Borrisokane and Kilruane MacDonaghs in the Senior Hurling League and Na Piarsaigh in the county Senior Hurling Championship (open draw that year), Nenagh Éire Óg finally came good when they defeated Toomevara in the first round of the 1970 North Tipp SHC, losers' group section. That was in 1970 when the side lost to Borris-Ileigh in the opening round proper by 3-11 to 4-3.



Nenagh Éire Óg Co. Senior Hurling champions 1995. Front: Donagh O'Donnell, Liam O'Gara, Gearoid Cleary. Chris Bonar, Michael Cleary, Darragh Quinn, Conor O'Donovan, capt, Robbie Tomlinson, Kevin Tucker, John Kennedy, Ronan Burns, Tom Conroy. Back: Robbie Foley, Donie O'Brien, Derek Conroy, Shane Connolly, Con Howard, John Heffernan, Paul Kennedy, Noel Coffey, Christy McLoughlin, Eddie Tucker, Frank Moran, Denis Finnerty, Joe O'Donoghue, Declan O'Meara, Hugh Flannery.

BORRISOKANE (Green & White)

1. VINCENT MCKENNA		
2. JIM MCLOUGHLIN	3. JOHN EGAN	4. DONIE COMERFORD
5. DERMOT MURPHY	6. ML. HEENAN	7. NIAL SLEVIN
8. ADRIAN HOGAN	9. TADGH SLEVIN	
10. EOIN CLEARY	11. PAUL DOOLEY	12. BARRY GOGHERY
13. EOIN LARKIN	14. JOHN MCKENNA	15. PADRAIG HOGAN (CAPT.)

Subs: 16. Paul Darcy, 17. Adrian Egan, 18. Liam Torpey, 19. Vivian Dooley, 20. Declan Morris, 21. Brian Hogan, 22. Pat Carroll, 23. Ronan Guest, 24. Ml. Darcy.

LORRHA (Blue & White)

1. KEN HOGAN		
2. CATHAL MCINTYRE	3. TOM MADDEN	4. MARTIN YOUNGE
5. STEPHEN HOGAN	6. JOHN MCINTYRE	7. DAVID HAUGHTON
8. JOHN MADDEN	9. ENDA MORAN	
10. BARRY MORAN	11. DECLAN O'MEARA	12. NOEL HOGAN
13. PAT KENNEDY	14. AIDAN MCINTYRE	15. RORY COEN

Subs: 16. Ronan Harding, 17. Padraic Madden, 18. Patrick Hough, 19. David Burke, 20. Donal Donoghue, 21. Trevor Hogan, 22. T.P. Sullivan, 23. Jim King, 24. James O'Meara.

Nenagh Éire Óg

1.

Christy McLoughlin

2.

Noel Coffey

3.

Conor O'Donovan

4.

John Heffernan

5.

Ritchie Flannery

6.

Hugh Flannery

7.

Michael Cleary

8.

Con Howard

9.

Johnnie Slattery

10.

Kevin Tucker

11.

Eddie Tucker

12.

John Kennedy

(capt.)

13.

Declan O'Meara

14.

Robbie Tomlinson

15.

MI. Hackett

FIR IONAIÐ:

Sub Goalie: **Kieran O'Brien**

16: **Declan Bailey**

17: **Joe O'Donoghue**

18: **Rory Flannery**

19: **Frank Morgan**

20: **Shane Connolly**

21: **Brian Fitzgibbon.**

22: **Eoghan Murtagh**

Manager/Coach: **Timmy Murphy;**

Selectors: **Neily Corbett, Jimmy Minogue, John Darcy**

P.E. Trainer: **Martin O'Grady.** Physiotherapist: **Frances Daly.**

Medics: **Paudg Kirwan, Frank Savage.**

Toomevara

	1. Justin Cottrell	
2. Dermot Brislane	3. Rory Brislane	4. Aidan Maxwell
5. Padraig Hackett	6. Tony Delaney	7. Philip Shanahan (capt.)
	8. Pat King	9. Ken Dunne
10. Paul McGrath	11. Terry Dunne	12. Paddy O'Brien
13. Michael Bevans	14. Kevin Kennedy	15. Denis Kelly

FIR IONAIÐ:

Sub Goalie: **Patrick McGrath**

16: **Tomás Dunne**

17: **George Frend**

18: **Martin Cahalan**

19: **Brian Duff**

20: **Kevin Cummins**

21: **Noel Cummins**

22: **Brendan Dunne**

23: **Owen Brislane**

24: **Jimmy Dunne**

25: **Kevin McCormack**

26: **Andrew Ryan**

27: **Brian McGrath**

Selectors: **Denis Haverty, Tony Dunne, Roger Ryan.**

Trainer: **Bertie Sherlock**

Nenagh Éire Óg pen pictures

<i>Name</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Height</i>	<i>Occupation</i>
Christy McLoughlin	24	6'1"	Hurling Coach
Noel Coffey	32	5'10"	Factory Employee
Conor O'Donovan	36	6'1"	Building Society Manager
John Heffernan	34	5'11"	Haulage Contractor
Rory Flannery	24	6'3"	Accountant
Declan Bailey	22	5'8"	Accountant
Ritchie Flannery	19	6'2"	Student
Hugh Flannery	20	6'0"	Student
Frank Moran	27	6'0"	Farm Enterprise Manager
Michael Cleary	32	5'8"	Shop and Restaurant Owner
John Kennedy	26	5'10"	Shop Manager
Con Howard	26	5'11"	Precast Concrete Foreman
Johnnie Slattery	20	5'11"	Student
Kevin Tucker	23	5'10"	Bank Official
Eddie Tucker	26	6'2"	Factory Employee
Declan O'Meara	23	6'1"	Factory Employee
Joe O'Donoghue	26	6'5"	Civil Engineer
Robbie Tomlinson	24	6'0"	Factory Employee
Michael Hackett	19	5'9"	Student
Kieran O'Brien	31	5'8"	Accountant
Shane Connolly	24	5'10"	Factory Employee
Eoghan Murtagh	20	5'10"	Student
Brian Fitzgibbon	17	5'7"	Student

Toomevara pen pictures

<i>Name</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Occupation</i>
Justin Cottrell	21	ESB Employee
Dermot Brislane	20	Student
Rory Brislane	31	Sales Representative
Aidan Maxwell	24	Farmer
Philip Shanahan <i>capt</i>	24	Factory Employee
Tony Delaney	27	Sales Representative
Padraig Hackett	21	Builder
Pat King	33	Factory Employee
Ken Dunne	21	Factory Employee
Paddy O'Brien	19	Student
Terry Dunne	23	Livestock Agent
Paul McGrath	18	Student
Michael Bevans	21	Student
Kevin Kennedy	27	Sales Representative
Denis Kelly	21	Student
Patrick McGrath	17	Student
Martin Cahalan	21	Factory Employee
Brian Duff	18	Student
Noel Cummins	17	Student
Brendan Dunne	18	Student
Eoin Brislane	17	Student
Brian McGrath	17	Student
Andrew Ryan	18	Student
Kevin Cummins	27	Carpenter
Jimmy Dunne	35	Carpenter
George Frend	28	Teacher
Tommy Dunne	24	Intel Employee



Toomevara panel 1993: Front row: Jimmy Dunne, Terry Dunne, Mike McCormack, Noel Kenneally, Michilin Delaney, Brendan Spillane, Kevin McCormack. Middle: Adrian Maxwell, Philip Shanahan, Tony Delaney, George Frend, Jody Grace, Declan O'Meara, Rory Brislane, John Ryan. Back: Liam Nolan, Michael Nolan, Michael Murphy, Pat Maher, Pat King, Liam Flaherty, Tommy Dunne, Tommy Carroll, Kevin Kennedy, Liam Nolan.

Young guns eager to impress

by Damien Lawlor (*The Examiner*)

It's that time of the year again, a time when old rivals pit it out against each other for North Tipperary hurling's greatest prize. This afternoon, fierce competitors Nenagh Éire Óg and Toomevara meet again in what has been generally deemed as a clash of the titans. Two great sides, no doubt about that, and a most impressive sign for both sides is their ability and willingness to allow their stream of youthful players to flow steadily through the ranks.

Both Nenagh and Toome have been to the fore of North Tipp hurling in recent years and Cloughjordan has played host to many a fine battle between the two in the past five or six years.

Toomevara have decided to give the likes of Paul McGrath, Gerry Kelly and Pdraig Hackett their chance this year. Add in Ken Dunne, Mikey Bevans, Paddy O'Brien and Aidan Maxwell and you could be forgiven that today's game was an underage clash instead of being a North final.

It's got to the stage now that Tommy Dunne, George Frend and Kevin Kennedy could be considered the 'elder statesmen' of the side. Paul McGrath appears to be an excellent find and should have been a certain starter for the county minors this year, instead he had to endure a ten minute spell on the sidelines before he was finally introduced against Clare. A member of last year's all-conquering minor team, McGrath has pace in abundance to dance his way past defenders. Bevans, O'Brien and Dunne all fall into this category. Bevans, in particular, had his season disrupted when he injured his arm in a Tipp U-21 challenge versus Offaly and he will be keen to make amends today. Dunne's free-taking and an ability to send prime quality ball into the full forward line also highlights his presence.

Nenagh Éire Óg, not to be outdone, have also opted for youth. Although I expect them to line out a pretty weathered full back line today, they have the likes of the nimble Johnny Slattery, the goal poacher Michael Hackett, the Tuckers and Ritchie and Hugh Flannery.

Ritchie Flannery is fast becoming a key player with UCC in colleges hurling and his cousin Hugh was unlucky not to make the final panel for the Tipp U-21 team – they have made great strides with Nenagh this year.

If you give Slattery an inch, he will take a mile and will always weigh in with a point or two – his pace caused havoc in the junior league campaign, can he make the successful step up? Michael Hackett will find it hard against a staunch Toome' defence but he, too, has a knack of popping up in the right places. And let us not forget Robbie Tomlinson, not long out of underage ranks, either. Tomlinson's injury problems have been well documented but he has fought back and like Roy Keane at Man Utd., appears to be improving with every game.

Although both sides are sprinkled with experience here and there, it appears that today's final will be a young man's game.

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Toomevara v Nenagh, 12 league meetings

Toomevara and Nenagh have met on twelve occasions since the current league began in 1986. It is seven to four in favour of Toomevara, while there has been one draw. The full list of results from those games is as follows:

1986:	May 25th	Rd. 8	Toomevara 0-6 Nenagh Eire Og 2-8	Cloughjordan
1987:	May 10th	Rd. 9	Toomevara 1-11, Nenagh Eire Og 1-11	Nenagh
1988:	No meeting			
1989:	Apr. 19th	Rd. 5	Nenagh awarded points v Toomevara	
1990:	No meeting.			
1991:	No meeting			
1992:	Mar. 3rd	Rd. 1	Toomevara 1-12, Nenagh Eire Og 0-10	Nenagh
1993:	No meeting			
1994:	Apr. 17th	Rd. 3	Toomevara 4-14, Nenagh Eire Og 1-7	Toomevara
	June 6th	Final	Toomevara 0-13, Nenagh Eire Og 0-11	Cloughjordan
1995	Apr. 4th	Rd. 5	Toomevara 3-15, Nenagh Eire Og 1-6	Nenagh
	June 4th	Final	Toomevara 2-7, Nenagh Eire Og 1-16	Cloughjordan
1996:	Mar. 16th	Rd 1	Toomevara 1-5, Nenagh Eire Og 0-11	Nenagh
1997:	Mar. 15th	Rd. 1	Toomevara 0-16, Nenagh Eire Og 1-8	Nenagh.
1997:	May 18th	Final	Toomevara 1-16, Nenagh Éire Óg 2-10	Cloughjordan
1998		Rd. 3	Toomevara 3-11, Nenagh Éire Óg 3-8	Toomevara

TOOMEVARA HALF BACK LINE 1966

Toomevara's half back line of Michael Bevans, Neill Williams and Tom Shanahan formed the backbone of the Greyhounds' six points semi-final win over Roscrea in the 1966 North Tipperary Senior Hurling Championship at Nenagh. Before approximately 3,000 patrons, Toomevara won by 1-11 to 2-2 in a game that formed a double bill in which Kilruane MacDonaghs defeated Borris-Ileigh in the opener.

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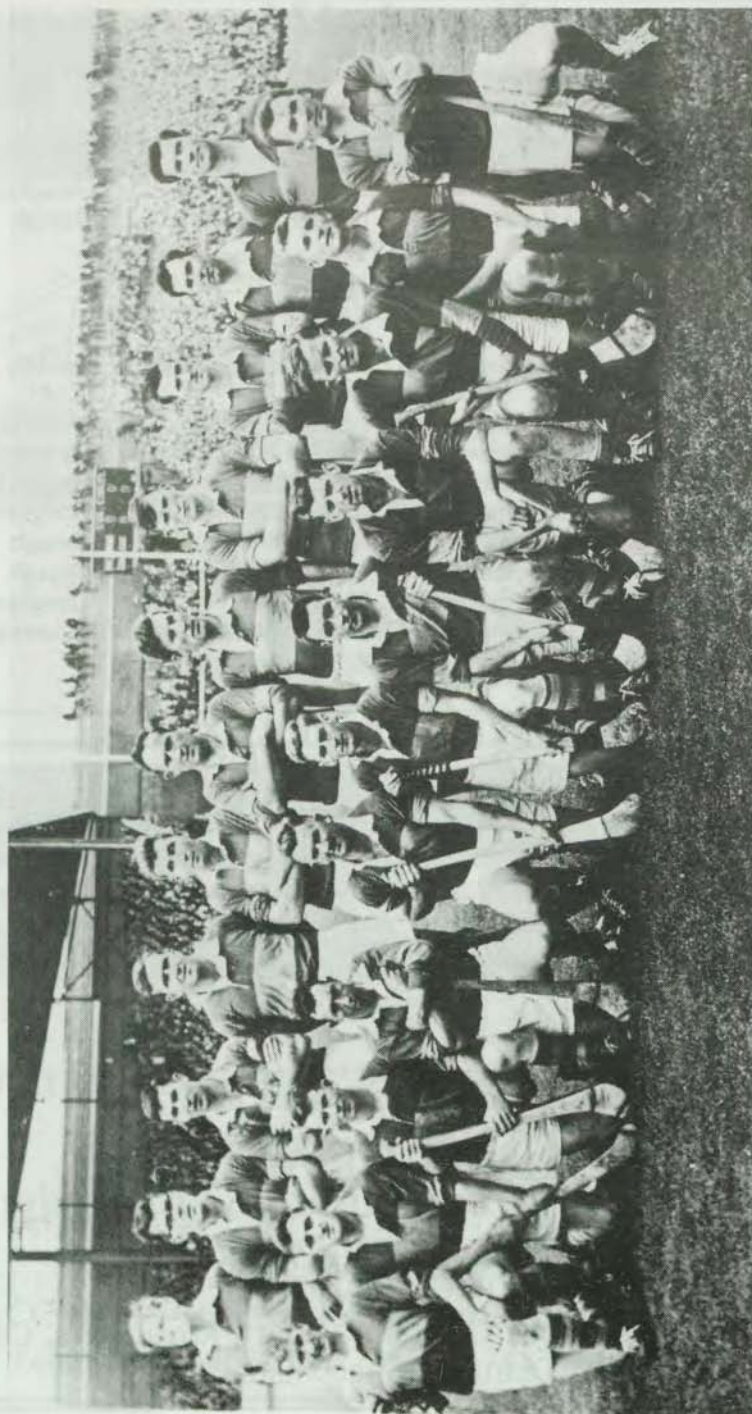
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Back row L. to R.: T. Ryan, M. O'Gara, R. Slevin, J. Doyle, T. Moloughney, M. Maher, K. Carey, T. Ryan, J. Connolly, M. Hassett, M. Murphy. Front row L. to R.: M. Burns, J. Devaney, D. O'Brien, M. McKenna, T. English. S. McLoughlin, R. Mounsey, C. Hartigan, T. Wall.

When Toomevara and Éire Óg last met in the North final

TOOMEVARA 2-11, NENAGH ÉIRE ÓG 2-7

The after-match scenes were almost indescribable, as Toomevara closed a barren twenty nine years gap, in their North Tipperary senior hurling championship history, when winning a memorable and thrilling title, in an entertaining replayed final at Cloughjordan on Sunday defeating Nenagh Éire Óg by 2-11 to 2-7.

These were moments to be savoured and Toomevara folk in the crowd of 4,000 celebrated the club's first senior championship win since 1962. The team got away to an enterprising start, to prove once more a good start is half the battle and with the Nenagh team putting in their hurling in the closing stages, held out for victory.

Éire Óg followers could only watch in anguish as their hurlers were deprived of their first championship win since 1964. Over the years they have been considered a soft touch but since their hurling renaissance near the start of the decade, have proved themselves more than capable of rubbing shoulders with the best.

FIRST TO SCORE

Toomevara with the aid of the light wind were the first to score. Tommy Dunne pointing a free in the opening minute. Two minutes later the Nenagh citadel fell in the simplest of fashions. Tony Delaney flighted in a ball from 50 metres; the defence got into a tangle with opposing forwards, and the end result the goalkeeper appeared unsighted with a dipping ball ending in the net.

In the sixth minute, Michael Cleary got Éire Óg moving with a point from a free. Toomevara went further ahead with Tony Delaney and Tommy Dunne (free) adding points but Éire Óg were right back in the game when Michael Kennedy finished a Philip Kennedy centre to the net. Toomevara led 1-3 to 1-1. Toomevara were the dominant team at this stage. Michael Nolan, Michael O'Meara (65) and Tony Dunne all getting on the scoresheet with a string of points. Cleary was off target with a 65, and he was down with a mouth injury. Philip Kennedy pointed a free for Éire Óg and Toomevara led at half time by 1-6 to 1-2.

GROANS

There were groans from the Éire Óg followers as Cleary was again wide with a free. Tommy Dunne and Cleary exchanged points, and the game was wide open as Robbie Tomlinson got in a drive that Jody Grace parried, but Eddie Tucker was on hand to put the ball in the net. The laurels seemed to be slipping away from Toomevara, as Éire Óg went to the front, John Heffernan and Philip Kennedy (free) pointing and the Nenagh team led 2-5 to 1-7.

George Frend put over a great equalising point and with Flaherty's goal the odds were back in favour of the green jersied brigade.

In the 19th minute Flaherty pointed for Toome and the victory roar was beginning to surface. Éire Óg pulled a point back through Philip Kennedy (free). Substitute John Ran left it 2-10 to 2-6 for Toomevara 25 minutes into the second half. The hurling was hectic in the closing five minutes with Heffernan and Tommy Dunne adding to the scoreboard, but Toome were back in control at the finish and deserving winners.



Nenagh Éire Óg, North final runners up 1991. Front: Con Howard, Michael Kennedy, Denis Finnerty, Neilly Corbett, Michael Cleary, Philip Kennedy, Paul Kennedy, John Kennedy. Back row: Donie O'Brien, John Heffernan, Conor O'Donovan, Frank Moran, Seamus Kennedy, Eddie Tucker, Jim Nagle.



Toomevara, 1991 North champions. Back row: Michael O'Meara, Liam Flaherty, Tony Dunne, Pat Maher, Jody Grace, Pat King, Michael Murphy, Jimmy Dunne. Front: Thomas Dunne, Declan O'Meara, George Frend, Rory Brislane, Sean Nolan, Michael Nolan, Tony Delaney.

NEVER FALTERED

Twenty nine long years of moral breaking frustration ended for Toomevara and they lifted the club into the race for county honours against the Mid runners up. Despite signs of adversary, Toomevara never buckled and the defence found new sources of energy. Michael O'Meara's composure never faltered, he played as if afraid the dark days would linger. With a kind of roaming commission, George Frend was not far behind.

Éire óg at the end of the day were not equipped enough to make the long sought breakthrough despite the best efforts of Conor O'Donovan, Donie O'Brien, Denis Finnerty, John Heffernan, Paul Kennedy and Philip Kennedy. Michael Cleary's contribution was limited and he was shadowed wherever he went by George Frend.

Scorers: Toomevara: T. Delaney 1-1, L. Flaherty 1-1, Tommy Dunne 0-4, G. Frend, Michael O'Meara, J. Ryan, M. Nolan, T. Dunne 0-1 each. Éire Óg: M. Kennedy 1-0, E. Tucker 1-0, P. Kennedy 0-3, J. Heffernan 0-2, M. Cleary 0-2.

TOOMEVARA: Jody Grace, Pat Maher, Liam Nolan, Rory Brislane, George Frend, Michael O'Meara, Declan O'Meara, Jimmy Dunne, Pat King, Liam Flaherty, Michael Murphy, Tony Delaney, Tony Dunne, Michael Nolan, Tommy Dunne. Subs: John Ryan for Nolan; P. Shanahan for J. Dunne.

NENAGH ÉIRE ÓG: Seamus Kennedy, Paul Kennedy, Conor O'Donovan, Donie O'Brien, Denis Finnerty, Frank Moran, John Heffernan, Noel Coffey, Philip Kennedy, John Kennedy, Michael Kennedy, Eddie Tucker, Michael Cleary, Philip Hennessy, Robbie Tomlinson. Subs: Neilly Corbett for Hennessy; Gerry Hynes for J. Kennedy.

Referee: Michael Cahill, Kilruane MacDonaghs.

League winners

Ten years ago Nenagh Éire Óg captured the North Tipp SHL final by defeating Moneygall at wet and windy Borrisokane. The score line read Éire Óg 2-12, Moneygall 1-7. Paul Kennedy captained the winning side while Michael Cleary received the Player of the Week.

The winning Éire Óg wide lined out as follows:

Seamus Kennedy, Liam Flannery, Donie O'Brien, P. J. Maxwell, Denis Finnerty, Paul Kennedy, Phil Hennessy, Philip Kennedy, P. J. Cooney, Michael Cleary, Michael Kennedy, Noel Coffey, John Ryan, Jim Nagle, Neilly Corbett. Subs: Robert Ashman for P. J. Cooney; Sean Minogue for Corbett.

Championship opener

Also ten years ago Toomevara defeated Moneygall in the opening round of the North Tipperary Senior Hurling Championship by 0-16 to 1-8 at Cloughjordan. The game was a milestone in that the youngest player ever to play in senior championship played for Toomevara.

He was Kevin McCormack who lined out in goals and at 16½ years of age. He became the youngest player since Tadhg Murphy of Roscrea who lined out in goals in the 1968 championship.

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take-off like an Olympic high jumper thus reaching the apex at the precisely correct moment. Man and ball uniting high above the ground and all opposition. He attained a perfection in his play that is etched forever in the hearts of all who saw him.

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Charlie Downes

When the late John Joe Maher picked his all-time greats of Roscrea hurling in 1980 he selected the late Charlie Downes at left half forward, beside Francis Loughnane and Mick Ryan.

Charlie had a distinguished hurling career, but it does not include a North senior hurling medal. He had left Roscrea for Dublin when the Reds made the breakthrough in 1936, and his only appearance in a North senior final, in 1949, for the St. Mary's, Nenagh, ended in defeat, ironically at the hands of Roscrea.

Charlie learned his hurling in Beechwalk, where Roscrea had their ground prior to the opening of St. Cronan's Park in 1932. He won his first medal in Beechwalk in 1928 in a street league when Main St. defeated Burgoo Rovers. That street league helped Roscrea win the North minor title of 1928, a feat they repeated in 1929, 1930, 1931. Charlie was on these teams, captaining in 1930. Two years later he had the distinction of winning Munster and All-Ireland medals with Tipperary, along with the late Joe Fletcher. He was playing senior for Roscrea in 1933 and 1934.

He moved to Dublin and joined Faughs, and *The Guardian* in its preview of the 1949 North final said that he had won eight senior titles with the club. It said he was on the Dublin team that won the 1938 All-Ireland, but this incorrect. He was on the 1941 and 1944 Dublin fifteen which lost to Cork. He was on the Leinster Railway Cup teams beaten by Munster in 1937 and 1942. A National League came his way in 1939, and Oireachtas in 1944.

His arrival in Nenagh to take over a licensed premises at MacDonagh St. was a big boost to St Mary's for the 1949 championship. They had entered senior ranks the previous year, losing the area final to Kildangan. He scored a goal in the opening round as the 1948 champions Lorrha were beaten 3-7 to 0-6, and as Kilruane were beaten in the semi-final 3-3 to 1-7, he was described in the match report as "at the spearhead, the brains behind the forward line". But the final against Roscrea was disappointing as the Reds proved the stronger side, winning 4-7 to 4-4. And so his distinguished career lacked that senior medal in his native county.

FINAL PAIRINGS

Do you know that Roscrea and Borris-Ileigh have met on a record number of times in the North Tipperary Senior Hurling Championship final? They have met on no fewer than eight occasions, with Borris-Ileigh winning five times. The finals were played in 1950, 1951, 1954, 1955, 1968, 1971, 1981, 1988.

Toomevara have met Kilruane most often in their North Tipperary Senior Hurling Final appearances. They have met on seven occasions, beginning in 1958, which was followed in 1959, 1960, 1962, 1986, 1990 and 1994. Toomevara lead by four final wins, to Kilruane's three.

Incidentally, Nenagh Eire Og and Roscrea have met on no fewer than four occasions, beginning with 1939, followed by three more, in 1949, 1964, and 1982.



George McGrath, manager, TSB Bank Nenagh, presenting £2,000 sponsorship for the North senior hurling championship to, left to right: Michael Nolan, Treasurer; Donal Shanahan, Chairman and Michael O'Brien, Secretary.



The top three – North GAA Board officers: Michael Nolan (Treasurer), Donal Shanahan (Chairman), and Michael O'Brien (Secretary) at the board's sponsorship launch at TSB Bank, Nenagh.

Player Profile

Justin Cottrell, Toomevara

When you look down from the stand in today's TSB North Tipperary Senior Hurling Championship final, you will notice a quiet, unassuming player guarding the goals for Toomevara – that person being none other than Justin Cottrell.

Justin took over the No. 1 jersey from Jody Grace and has established himself as a most dependable goal-keeper. He is a very dedicated player and always gives one hundred per cent effort in every game – whether it be for club or county.

Justin has been a member of the Tipperary U-21 panel for the past two years and was also on the Tipperary senior hurling panel which was defeated by the narrowest of margins by Clare in last year's All-Ireland final. He has had a number of successes, winning three North Tipperary minor hurling medals and also two North Tipperary and one county senior hurling medals. Justin has also won two North Tipperary Senior Hurling League medals.

Just, you could say, is a product of his club's highly successful underage structure. He has won three North Tipperary and one county U-21 hurling medal, an U-14 county Féile medal; two North Tipperary urban/rural medals and a county rural medal. He has also won a Garda Cup medal U-16.



Anybody who has seen Justin playing over the years can tell you of his great displays between the posts when he has never been found wanting for lack of efforts.

We all know that reputations count for nothing, especially in a final, but you can rest assured that if Toomevara win today, Justin Cottrell will have contributed more than his fair share to their success.

TOP FIVE SCORERS IN 1997, AFTER NORTH S.H. FINAL

1. Conor Stakelum, Borris-Ileigh 1-53 (6 games)
2. Mark O'Leary, Kilruane MacDonaghs 1-34 (4 games)
3. Ken Dunne, Toomevara 0-23 (3 games).
4. Padraig Hogan, Borrisokane 0-22 (3 games).
5. Barry O'Driscoll, Portroe 0-21 (3 games).



Conor O'Donovan led Nenagh Éire Óg to be league champions in 1995 seen here with some young admirers.



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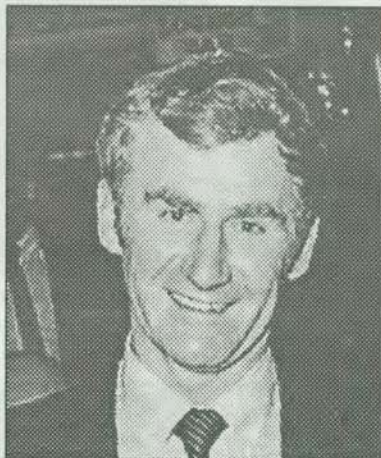
Player of the Past:

John Tucker, Nenagh Éire Óg

John has, and is, giving a lifetime of service to the Éire Óg Club from his juvenile and minor days. He first played on the Éire Óg junior team of 1963, missing out by one year on the winning team of 1962. Unfortunately it was to be the story of his hurling career that spanned a 20 year playing period having got to a drawn senior final against Roscrea in '82 - the game was never replayed owing to the stand the Nenagh club took to what was seen as unfair background politics by members of the board at the time.

1984, Éire Óg were again in a North final, only to lose by a slender margin to great rivals Lorrha. However, most disappointingly of all was having been a part of the inside back line for so long he was to find himself on the subs' bench for the start of the game. However, he was made of stern stuff and played on for a few more years at senior level. A fearless and a most competent player, who always gave of his best and a huge support to those players around him. He ended his playing days like many great players empty handed in terms of medals. But what service he gave during the lean years!

Having hung up his gear he gave of himself unselfishly to club administration and served as



club vice-chairman before moving on to team management. As manager, selector and coach it was to be his most rewarding roll, starting as a selector on the four-in-a-row u-21 county title winners 1979 to 1982 and again when the club won county minor honours in 1992 and 1993, he was a part of the management team.

When the senior hurlers, after a 28 year gap, won North titles in 1992 and 1993 John was a part of Liam Heffernan's back room team. 1993 Éire Óg reached a county senior final for the very first time only to lose out to Toomevara by the slenderest of margins.

With the emergence of his sons on the senior stage, he thought it best to call it a day at this level and instead diverted his expertise to u-10 hurling in an effort, with many others who are doing trojan work, to nurture and promote the game of hurling in the huge challenge of keeping the assembly line in motion.

John hails from a great and deep-rooted GAA family: his brothers Oliver, Jimmy, Christy and Ger all worthy members of Éire Óg teams over the years. Oliver been a corner back on the 1964 title winning team. However, during his life long association with his beloved Nenagh Éire Óg Club 1995 will stand out as the high water mark. First his son Kevin played a major role in Tipperary winning the All-Ireland u-21 and then a few weeks later the club at last brought home the Dan Breen Cup with Eddie and Kevin receiving two separate man of the match rewards.

Dedication and a lifetime of service had at last filled his cup of job to over-flowing.



Action from Toomevara v Borrisokane final 1961. Looking on Phil Shanahan (T), Frankie Ryan (T), Denis Gardiner (No 3 Borrisokane), and Gerry Hough (14, Toomevara) as back and forwards tussle for possession.



Action from the 1961 North senior final Toomevara v Borrisokane. Left to right: John Hough (T), Frank Rhan (T), Joe Morris (B), and Paul Whyte (B).

1998 T.S.B. Nenagh

Senior Hurling Championship

FIRST ROUND:

Date	Teams	Venue	Ref.
May 31	Newport 1-12 - Lorrha 0-13	Nenagh	M.Darcy
June 13	Toomevara 2-11 - Borrisokane 1-12	C'jordan	M. Aherne
June 13	Nenagh Eire Og 2-17 - Roscrea 2-5	M'gall	M. Griffin
June 14	Portroe 1-16 - Kilruane MacD. 1-14	Toomevara	M. Griffin
June 27	Borris-Ileigh 1-17 - Moneygall 3-6	Toomevara	J. McDonnell

LOSERS GROUP:

June 27	Kilruane MacD. 1-15 - Borrisokane 2-12	Roscrea	G. McKeogh
June 28	Roscrea 2-14 - Lorrha 3-8	Borrisokane	M Cahill
July 10	Roscrea 1-11 - Moneygall 1-9	Cloughjordan	T.F. Stapleton
July 12 R.	Borrisokane 2-21 - Kilruane MacD. 1-15 A.E.T.	Clough'	Ger McKeogh

LOSERS GROUP FINAL:

July 25	Roscrea 2-14 - Borrisokane 1-11	Toomevara	T.F. Stapleton
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WINNERS SECTION:

Q. FINALS:

July 25	Nenagh Eire Og 1-14 - Borris-Ileigh 2-8	Toomevara	M. Cahill
July 26	Portroe 0-14 - Newport 0-12. Toomevara bye.	Nenagh	M. Darcy.

SEMI-FINALS:

Aug 9	Nenagh Eire Og 3-21 - Roscrea 4-7	C'jordan	M. Cahill
Aug 13	Toomevara 4-17 - Portroe 2-6	Nenagh	Mtn Ahearne

Roscrea Bazaar

On June 2nd. 1907, six teams entered a hurling tournament, which was held in connection with Roscrea Bazaar.

St. Flannan's, Dunkerrin played Lorrha, which the former won 5-4 to 1-4.

This game was followed by Coolderry and De Wets which ended in a 2-9 to 2-4 win to the Offaly side, while Nenagh Institute defeated Birr by 0-14 to 0-6.

MATT HASSETT ON THE FORI Y

All-Ireland winning captain Matt Hassett (Toomevara) lined out at wing forward for his side's 4-7 to 2-6 semi-final win over Roscrea in 1957.

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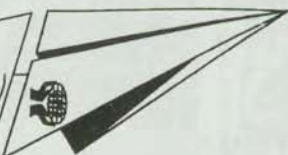
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Last Ten North Finals

FACTS AND FIGURES

EIGHT teams have contested the division's greatest prize in the ten North Tipp. S.H. Finals, 1988 - 97.

SEVEN teams finished in the runners-up spot, they include Toomevara, Nenagh Eire Og, Kilruane MacDonaghs, Lorrha, Borris-Ileigh, Moneygall and Roscrea.

SIX teams have brought home the silverware, they include: Toomevara, Nenagh Eire Og, Newport, Kilruane MacDonagh, Lorrha and Borris-Ileigh.

BIGGEST winning margin in the same period was in 1992 when Nenagh Eire Og defeated Lorrha by thirteen points.

TWO of the finals ended in draws - 1991 and 1998, when Toomevara drew with Nenagh Eire Og in the former and Newport drew with Lorrha in the latter. Both Toomevara and Newport went onto win the replays.

THE biggest number of goals was five, which was scored in Newport's 2-12 to 3-6 win over Lorrha.

Results of the last ten North Senior Hurling finals are as follows:

Year	Date	Teams	Venue	Ref.
1988	July 24	Borris-Ileigh 1-14 - Roscrea 1-7	Nenagh	Ml. Cahill
1989	Aug. 20	Lorrha 1-14 - Toomevara 1-12	Nenagh	J. McDonnell
1990	July 29	Kilruane MacD. 2-7 - Toomevara 0-5	Nenagh	Gerry Long
1991	Sept. 22	Toomevara 0-12 - Nenagh Eire Og 0-12	C'jordan	Ml. Cahill
	Sept. 29	Toomevara 2-11 - Nenagh Eire Og 2-7	C'jordan	Ml. Cahill
1992	Aug. 30	Nenagh Eire Og 1-18 - Lorrha 0-9	C'jordan	Ml. Lenihan
1993	Aug. 22	Nenagh Eire Og 0-14 - Moneygall 0-12	C'jordan	J. McDonnell
1994	Aug. 14	Toomevara 1-15 - Kilruane MacD. 0-7	Nenagh	J. McDonnell
1995	Aug. 20	Toomevara 0-18 - Borris-Ileigh 1-12	Nenagh	Ger Hayes
1996	Sept. 8	Newport 1-9 - Lorrha 0-12	Nenagh	T.F. Stapleton
	R. Sept. 15	Newport 2-13 - Lorrha 3-6	Nenagh	T.F. Stapleton
1997	Aug. 3	Toomevara 1-15 - Borris-Ileigh 0-8	C'jordan	Jn. McDonnell

TALLY

Toomevara	4.
Nenagh Eire Og	2.
Newport	1
Kilruane MacD.	1

An impressive from half display was enough to give Nenagh victory, while Kevin Tucker gave a Man of the Match display.

Curtain Raiser

To-days opening game is the first S.H.C. relegation tie in the divisions history. As a result of a county development committee decision, relegation from senior grade to intermediate is now part of hurling life. To-day the honour of taking part in such a historic meeting falls to Borrisokane and Lorrha. Win this game and your guaranteed senior hurling for 1999, lose it and it's down to intermediate ranks, indefinitely.

Borrisokane, Kilruane MacDonaghs, Moneygall and Lorrha were placed in the relegation zone as a result of them not winning the losers group. Last weekend Borrisokane lost to Kilruane while Lorrha lost heavily to Moneygall. So while Kilruane McDonagh and Moneygall can stay up in senior, it's all or nothing for the two Lower Ormond sides.

Remember, Borrisokane just gained promotion to senior ranks two years ago. Their opponents, Lorrha, were promoted way back in 1947. So the moment of truth should arrive by 3.12 p.m. approx for either side. Be it Lorrha or Borrisokane, history is in the making.



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Paddy Connors, Portroe and Paddy O'Brien, Toomevara seek possession in the North Tipp senior hurling semi-final between Toomevara and Portroe.



Captains Pat Maher, Toomevara meets with Brian Gaynor, Kilruane MacDonaghs, prior to the North Tipp senior hurling final of 1994. The referee is Johnny McDonnell, Roscrea.



Toomevara, North champions, 1961.



Jubilant Tipperary captain, Matt Hassett carries the McCarthy Cup through Kickham Street, Nenagh after Tipp's All-Ireland success in 1961.

Which Club Is For the Big Drop?

By GERRY SLEVIN

Has it really hit home yet?

Next year's senior hurling championship will be without Lorrha, or Borrisokane.

One of them will have dropped back to Intermediate ranks and must strive for re-entry through that very competitive grade.

It all comes about because of a decision of the County Board in response to the recommendations of a special group set up to streamline competitions. The sub-committee decided there were too many senior clubs in the county, the Board agreed at a special Convention and the wheels were set in motion to reduce the number so that by the year 2000, there would be a reduction of six teams in the present set-up of thirty two.

From then on, one team will go down annually, to be decided by a play-off involving the bottom team in each of the four divisions. The promotion of the Intermediate county champions will balance matters out.

ITS OWN MECHANISM

Each divisional board has to devise its own mechanism in regard to how the relegation battle is conducted and the North Board has set about its process by sending in four of the five losers group teams, to a two semi finals and a final scene. Exempt are the eventual winners of the losers group, Roscrea, so that the Sword of Damocles was poised to fall on one of the other four, Borrisokane, Lorrha, Kilruane, Moneygall – the second named two, had their bacon saved in play-offs.

Only two years ago, Lorrha took Newport to a replay before losing the North final. They were also in the final in '92 when following their marathon session -- three games -- with Toomevara, they fell to Nenagh in the final. Lorrha's last final victory was in '89.

Borrisokane were semi finalists a year ago, their first time since 1969 while their one and only divisional title was won as far back as 1933.

MOST COMPETITIVE

So when you consider the potential "drop-downs" you find you are looking at a duo, which in the present decade, might not have set the scene alight to the same extent as, say Toome or Nenagh, but which for all that have been most competitive.

The real problem with being relegated is that it will come about, not because of the club's own desire to seek the drop in the interests of building up enthusiasm within its ranks, but because its success rate in championship warrants such demotion.

The draw for the relegation play-offs pitted Kilruane and Borrisokane against each other -- it took two games and extra time to separate them in their losers group match -- with Lorrha and Moneygall the other semi final opponents.

Who will go down?

VICTORY AND RELEGATION?

That, I am not prepared to answer but a thought has struck me about this relegation scene,



Nenagh Éire Óg U-17 hurling 1970. Front: Joe Sheary, Wm. Fogarty, Donal Hackett, John Sherlock, Liam Heffernan, John Mackey, P. J. Mallon, Adrian Grace, Neilly Corbett. Back: Jim Ryan, Timmy Gleeson, Denis O'Connor, Johnny Maguire, Sean Quinn, Pat Butler, Ml. Bourke, Pat Herlihy, Pat O'Donoghue, Eddie Connolly.



Nenagh Éire Óg, 1989 North M.H. winners. Back left to right: Mark Sheahan, Fergal Hynes, Con Howard, Joe O'Donoghue, Ronan Burns, Brendan Shanahan, Matthew Mulqueen, John Moylan, Derek Conroy. Front: John Kennedy, Robbie Tomlinson, Gearóid Cleary, Declan Nolan, capt, Brian Connolly, Frank McGrath, Cyril Bailey.

improbable perhaps, but yet it could happen nonetheless, and I'll give it to you by way of a question.

Is it possible to be county champions AND to be relegated IN THE SAME SEASON?. The answer is yes.

And how come, you may well ask?. Well, let us take Toomevara, for example, as winners of the Hogan Cup (North SHL) going through to a play-off against the North runners-up for a place in the county quarter finals. They then go on and win the county final.

Couple with that, first round defeat in the North championship, defeat in the losers group and then defeat in the relegation play-off. Down they go to Intermediate grade the following year and they do so as COUNTY CHAMPIONS.

By the way, the same process as obtains this season must be repeated next year, for another team from each division to go down. After that only one team from the COUNTY is relegated.

This relegation scene could well prove to be a real money-spinner for the Board yet, interest in the play-off matching that of the championship itself

That's not to be laughed at, is it?.

The early years

Both Toomevara and Nenagh met on at least seven occasions between 1901 and 1931.

They met in a North Final in 1923, in the famed Greyhound years and in the semi-final of 1930, when a Nenagh-De Wets selection lost by seven points. It seems that Toome' nearly always had the upper hand.

Year	Teams
1903	Toomevara beat Nenagh
1904	Toomevara lost to Nenagh.
1910	Toomevara beat Nenagh.
1923	Toomevara 7-02 to Nenagh 1-02 (North Final).
1927	Toomevara beat Nenagh.
1930	Toomevara 3-02 - to Nenagh De Wets 1-01 (semi-final).
1931	Toomevara lost to Nenagh (1st round).

THE 1940'S

The sides did not meet during these years as it was a lean period for Toomevara. They were regraded to the Intermediate grade for a number of years.



Michael Cleary keeps an eye on the ball while George Frend (Toomevara) keeps an eye on Michael Cleary in the 1991 North final. Also in photograph are Toomevara's Sean Nolan (3) and Pat Maher (2) along with Philip Hennessy of Éire Óg.

TOOMEVARA, CLUB OF THE YEAR WINNERS, 1987



North Board Chairman, Noel Morris, presents the Club of the Year award to Pat McGrath and Tom Shanahan



Former Tipp selectors Sean Ryan, Toomevara and Paddy Kenny, Carrick-on-Suir.

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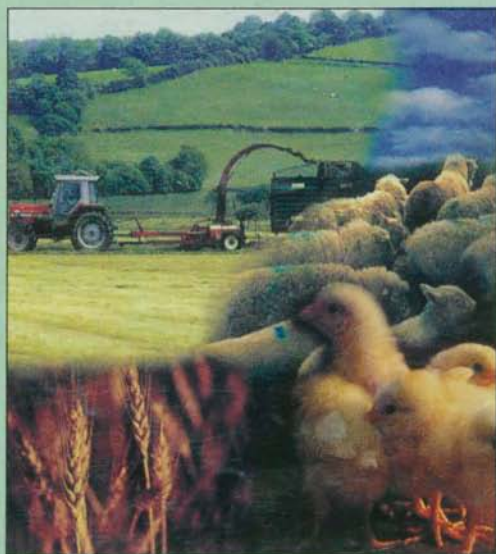
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