

SHINTY



YEAR

BOOK

1971

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DONALD M. MACKAY

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SHINTY
YEARBOOK
1971

Editor
PETER R. ENGLISH

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EDITORIAL

In November 1970, a suggestion that an attempt be made to launch a popular annual publication on shinty was made at a meeting of the North of Scotland Shinty Association in Inverness. The need was recognised for a medium in which the great fund of shinty lore and contemporary statistics on the game could be recorded and in which ideas on the future planning of our ancient game could be aired.

The first "Shinty Yearbook" has been prepared with these objectives in mind. It is hoped that it will appeal to all age groups and that the ladies too will find in it some items to interest them.

It is difficult in an effort of this kind to give comprehensive coverage to all aspects of the game and to all areas in which the game is played. There is no doubt that omissions have been made, such as team lists of specific schools. You readers will be more aware of these omissions than I and you can avoid such anomalies in subsequent 'yearbooks' by sending relevant material to me.

It is to be hoped that this publication will, indeed, become an 'annual'. There is no doubt whatsoever in my mind that a wealth of historical and contemporary material is available to make an annual publication possible and if the response to requests for material will be as enthusiastic in the future as it has been in the present case, then the future of the venture should be ensured. Accordingly, any contributions for the 1972 Yearbook will be greatly welcomed and the sooner they arrive, the easier the preparation will be. I should also like to have from readers any criticisms of the 1971 Yearbook and any suggestions you may have which will help subsequent Yearbooks to meet popular demand.

November 1971

Peter R. English
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The North of Scotland Shinty Association is deeply grateful to The Highlands and Islands Development Board for providing financial assistance to make possible the publication of several hundred copies of the 'Shinty Yearbook 1971' in addition to the total number which clubs have undertaken to purchase. The encouragement and help of the Board staff in this venture is also much appreciated.

The production of this Yearbook would not have been possible were it not for the magnificent voluntary efforts of the contributors and to all of them, the Editor is due his grateful thanks for their encouragement and for their contributions. To Mr. Iain Fullerton, who voluntarily contributed most of the photographs, Mr. Murdo Campbell, who collected the statistics on schoolboy player 'pools' and Mr. J.W. Campbell, who prepared the MacGillivray League statistics, the Editor is much indebted.

Finally, grateful thanks are due to all clubs who gave a commitment to purchase a given number of copies of the 'Yearbook'. Without such a commitment and their encouragement, the publication of the 'Yearbook' would not have been possible.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF OF THE CAMANACHD ASSOCIATION

I am deeply grateful for having been invited to write a brief message in this, the first 'Shinty Yearbook'. I would like to say how much I appreciate the tremendous effort made by the Editor, Dr. Peter English, and all those who have made worthwhile contributions to this notable publication.

A great deal of enthusiasm and energy has been devoted for many years to the task of keeping the game of shinty alive in Scotland. It is one aspect of our heritage of which we in The Camanachd Association are the trustees in this generation. It is for us to honour this trust, maintain it and hand it over to those who come after us so that it will go from strength to strength.

In these days of rising costs — not to mention an iniquitous tax — we must have more money to carry on our national game. Our funds are totally inadequate to permit of our commitments being performed efficiently. So it is my duty as Chief to appeal to all players, young and old, and all those who wish to support a deserving cause to share with the Editor the superb enthusiasm which he has brought into this voluntary work, and ensure that every single copy is sold.

Gu ma fada mhaireas Camanachd.

Donald Thomson

IOMAIN

by

ALLAN FRASER

The incomparable game now known as shinty, in older times was called 'iomain'. It is under the Gaelic title that Donald Mackinnon (1839 - 1914), native of Colonsay and the first Professor of Celtic Languages, Literature, History and Antiquities in the University of Edinburgh, described the favourite pastime of the scholars in the village school, the 'Seann Sgoil' of his early days. As soon as school had concluded with a Bible reading and prayer, out came the 'camain' from under the table, and 'iomain' was played until it was too dark to see.

The word 'iomain' is itself of interest since its meaning is rather diverse; the driving forwards of anything from cattle to a shinty ball. Since it is generally agreed among Celtic scholars that Gaelic was the language spoken in the Garden of Eden, it is plausible to speculate that 'iomain' was the word used to describe the exile of our earliest ancestors, and the 'camain' the instrument used to enforce it.

Certainly shinty is not merely the best but also the oldest of manly sports. Hurley is merely the Hiberian descendant of the shinty St. Patrick introduced into Ireland. Hockey is shinty's emasculated derivative. The origin of football is of historical interest. In the good old days of clan battles, shinty being rightly regarded as a magnificent preparation for combat, there were no official rules regarding foul play. There is indeed an old Gaelic proverb which says that all is fair in love and shinty. There was, however, one severe penalty imposed on rare occasions by the clan chieftain. Should any player fail to disable at least one opponent he was deprived of his caman. He was permitted, however, to kick the 'cnaige' or shinty ball, the origin of the modern out-crop of big business commonly called professional football.

Old clan soldiers who never died were permitted to fade away with camans in their palsied hands. These senior citizens, in the quietude and peace suitable to their years, were given grace to swing their camans and strike the 'cnaige' to the limits of their failing strength on a green lawn in the laird's own policies. So golf was born, a pleasant and suitable pastime for those too old to fight except amongst themselves.

Yet many an aging Highlander refused to grow old, and the green sward of the golf-course became strewn with the plaids that the 'bodaich' discarded to have one final crack at each other before their last debts were paid.

Even in the middle of the 19th century, a hundred years after the Celtic fires were quenched by the thunder of Cumberland's guns on the field of Culloden, Professor Mackinnon described how his aged school master would join the game his pupils preferred.

"As deidh na chaige gu luthmhor bheir e, ag greimeachadh ceann caol a' bhata; agus an tiota tha i aig an tadhal as faide air falbh." (He was away lustily after the ball, gripping the thin end of his stick, and in a second it was at the furthest off goal.)

Shinty in olden times was, of course, less formal, more spontaneous, and varied than it is to-day. There was far more whisky and far fewer rules. One parish took on another, without any limit of the number of players or on the pails full of 'uisge-beatha' at the sides of the field.

William Ross, the Gaelic love poet, told of such a shinty match in Gairloch towards the end of the 18th century.

It is comforting to reflect that the noted Gaelic singer of lost love could forget his sorrow in a good bash at a shinty ball. Not that it was a ball the Gairloch heroes whacked at; it was something far more deadly. In his nostalgic poem — "Moladh A'Bhaird air a thir fein air dha bhi air farsan ann an tir choigrich" — (The Bard's praise for his own land, he being abroad in a strange land) he wrote of

"Gu'n ti Nollaig mhor le sonas
Gu comunn gun phrabar,
O'n's lionmhor gaisgeach le sar-acfuinn
Theid gu feach na traghaidh
Mar shluagh Mhic-Chumhail le cruaidh fhiubhaidh
Ruaig gun chun air stracan;
Bi'dh Muireardach maide fo bhinn chabhar
Gu stad i sa Braighe."

Translation of this passage is not easy and George Calder made a sorry mess of it but his version must pass muster here.

"Come Christmas with happiness,
To the meeting with no splore
The heroes with no mean skill
Play shinty still on the low shore.
Like host of Feen with weapons keen
The rout spares nane in affrays
The champion's ball in the club's control
Till it cease to roll in the Braes."

In this classic annual combat the ball or 'a'chnac' was a large round mass of hard wood, a sufficiently dangerous missile, and when Ross took a belt at it he may well have cried out in his love-lorn despair, "And *that* for you Captain Clough!" he being the wealthy sailor who had married Mor 'Marion' Ross, and sailed away with her to Liverpool. Undoubtedly, in any similar situation, shinty is a tremendous emotional relief to any jilted lover.

This game of shinty, then, has a sufficiently ancient and colourful history. What of its future? Just as in the case of the Gaelic language it is a primary

mistake to think of it only in association with Highland scenery and lonely country places. All races of Europe are becoming ever more concentrated in towns, the Highlanders of Scotland no less than others. Shinty, then, must spread to the cities and the "Buidheann Camanach Obairdheathain" — The Aberdeen Shinty Club — of which I have the honour to be Chieftain, is not only a notably successful example but is furthermore solvent, a remarkable achievement in a Celtic organisation.

SUMMARY OF A DISSERTATION ON SCOTTISH CAMANACHD

by

MUIRNE A.N. CAIMBEUL



The expression 'camanachd' has as its root 'cam' meaning a turn or twist, an apt description of the club used in the game of shinty. The word 'shinty' itself, although it is a more modern term, is more uncertain in its derivation. Various theories have been suggested but the most probable is that it is a corruption of 'sinteag' meaning a leap or stride. Although the game is played today in areas which are now English speaking, the original terminology of shinty was in Gaelic. It is played today mainly in the West and Central Highlands with pockets in the industrial belt and in Aberdeen. Players come from varied walks of life; no social or educational barriers are involved.

The game developed naturally from the obvious recreational value of a ball or ball and club. Many different forms have evolved from this pattern including hockey, golf, tennis, etc. Camanachd would seem to have been peculiar to the Celtic peoples and references to it can be found in the mythological and traditional tales of Ireland. These tales of Cu Chulainn and other heroes refer to a time long before the cultures of Scotland and Ireland became separated and the distinctive games of Shinty and Hurlley developed. It seems reasonable to suppose that the ancient game is the ancestor of shinty.

True historical references do not appear frequently. The first tentative ones are negative e.g. an act of Parliament in the 14th Century forbidding every kind of ball game including 'cambuca'. Very little mention of the game can be found until the 18th Century when it became the fashion for people like Thomas Pennant to make tours of Scotland and to make observations on the sights there — including shinty. Many of the references of this period, therefore, appear in the works of people outside the Highlands and some imply that the game is either declining or is a thing of the past. During the 19th century, however, reports of games appear in newspapers e.g. the Edinburgh Evening Courant, the Inverness Courier. One periodical, the Glasgow based Celtic Monthly contains a spate of reports at a time when the editor and the president of the Glasgow Cowal Shinty Club were one and the same gentleman.

Literary evidence of the 18th and 19th centuries also suggests that the game was perhaps played, at first, so regularly that little mention was made of it, but later intermittently and to a decreasing extent, particularly during the 19th century. References appear in both Gaelic and English literature though the Gaelic poetry and, later, prose is generally superior both in literary value and value as reference. This is not surprising since one of the main contributors is Mairi Nighean Iain Bhain (Mary MacPherson), one of the leading poets of the 19th century. The decline of the game may partly be attributed to the large scale migrations from the rural areas of the Highlands to the centres of population in the south of Scotland and beyond. It continued to be played in those centres but the old tradition was broken and its foundations in the cities were weak because customs and pastimes were different. The changes in the religious climate in the 19th century were also detrimental to shinty as well as to other pastimes. The clergy now frowned upon 'frivolity' and any 'breaches' of the sanctity of the Sabbath Day.

Before the game was organised, rules were few and basic. There was no limit to the number of players — every able man took part — or to the size of 'pitch'. Teams were not distinguished because each was known to the other and to the spectators. Different and often complicated customs — methods of starting matches, of resolving disputes, of making balls etc. — obtained in different areas. Some would throw up the ball between two opposing players to start, some would bury it to be dug up; the ball was sometimes of wood, sometimes of tightly wound wool. Sometimes there were incantations to be

recited before a match. When shinty became less localised and its survival more uncertain, it was realised that some uniformity was necessary and more rules must be formulated so that the game would be more orderly.

Towards the end of the 19th century, steps were taken towards this end. In London, the Comunn nam Fìor Gaidheal; in Glasgow, the Glasgow Celtic Society; in the north, The Strathglass Shinty Club and subsequently in Kingussie, the newly formed Camanachd Association all produced rules and the Celtic and Camanachd Cups were presented for competition. Shinty Clubs had already been formed in many areas to try to preserve the game. The rules of the Camanachd Association were used by teams in the north and those of the Glasgow Celtic Society in the south. Since, however, the former was formed solely for the promotion of shinty, in contrast with the latter which had other interests, it has become virtually, though not indisputably, the main body of organised shinty and its cup the ultimate prize. These original rules have been considerably extended and modified since then and smaller local associations have been formed but all have sprung from the events of the late 19th century.

The subsequent years presented numerous problems. The clubs and associations were slow to learn that co-operation was essential if the organisation were to be run smoothly. Finance was always a difficulty. The rising popularity of other sports, particularly football, tended to eclipse shinty especially when the mass media chose to glorify some and to ignore others. Clubs also had to contend with migrations resulting from changing economic conditions. Some of these problems have yet to be solved.

The Camanachd Association made several attempts to broaden the horizon of shinty and to publicise it. International matches between Hurlley and Shinty teams were arranged. These enjoyed a degree of temporary success but were hampered by 'political' undertones. Attempts were made to secure co-operation with An Comunn Gaidhealach but these failed. The B.B.C. was repeatedly approached and eventually gave a lukewarm response which has continued. The Association has also tried with some success to promote the game in schools. This is an important aspect but it must be followed to its conclusion.

At club level fortunes have been varied. Some have prospered and many have declined. The two World Wars dealt severe blows but clubs in Badenoch, South Argyll, Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen have proved to be consistently strong or long-standing. Difficulties today are as great as they have ever been so that great efforts are still required. This is realised and is being combatted as is witnessed by the fact that entry for the Camanachd Cup is maintaining an encouraging level. This must be continued for the sake of sport in its true sense, for the education and discipline required for the game and for those, players and officials alike, who have given unfailing support to the game through the years.

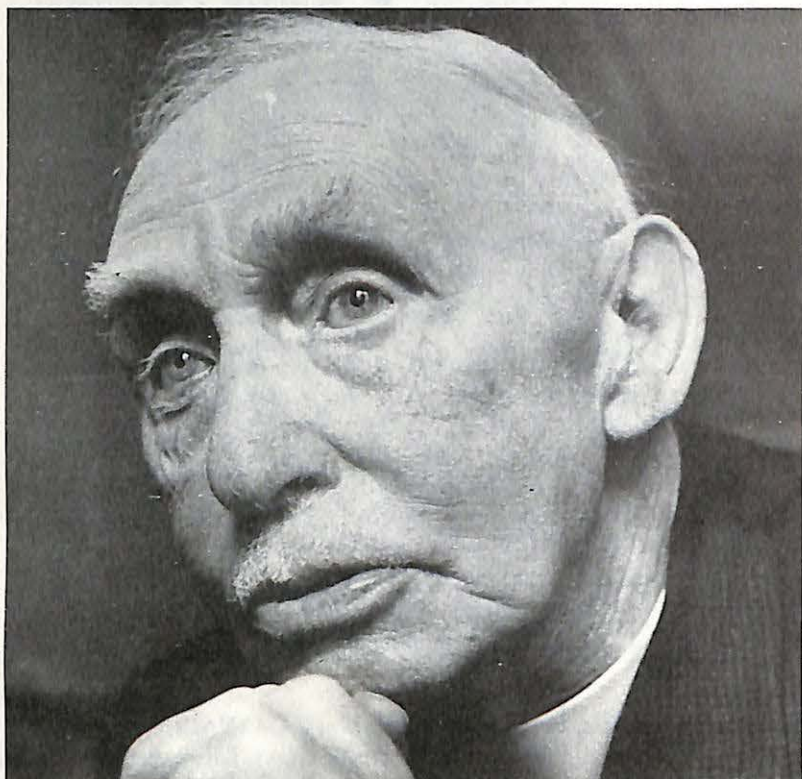
Footnote. Miss Caimbeul completed her Honours degree course in Celtic studies this year at Aberdeen University. Her course involved a special study and the writing of a dissertation on the chosen subject. Her dissertation was entitled 'Scottish Camanachd, a study of the traditional, historical and cultural background with an outline of the modern organisation'. Muirne has shinty in her veins, being a grand-daughter of the late Col. John Campbell, T.D., first secretary of the Camanachd Association.



This ornate belt buckle, bearing the inscription CAMANACHD GU BRATH (shinty for ever) is in the possession of Donnie Grant, Kingussie. It was given to him by a Donald MacKintosh of Leault, Kincaig, who was an active player in the early 1900s. Can any reader supply details of its origin or the competition in which it was won?

THE REV. ANGUS JOHN MacVICAR,
Shinty Stalwart of a Bygone Age

by his son,
ANGUS MacVICAR
(author of 'Salt in My Porridge')



My father, the Rev. Angus John MacVicar of Southend, Kintyre, who died last year aged 92, had a lifelong love-affair with shinty.

I remember in his latter days how annoyed he used to get with the newspapers and the BBC when they failed to give proper coverage to some match which he considered important. A Littlejohn Cup-tie, for example. "They tell us plenty about the English national game, that blasted cricket! Why can't they tell us more about our Scottish national game, the shinty?"

He was a native of North Uist. As a boy he lived in a "black" house thatched with heather. It had two rooms, a kitchen and a bedroom, with two doors at opposite sides of the building. The windows were mere slits in the stone walls. A fire of peat smouldered day and night in the middle of the earthen floor in the kitchen, and a hole in the roof let the smoke out. The beds were of straw, which was changed twice a year in June and November. The only light on dark evenings was a *cruiskán*, a small dish of oil with a wick in it.

There were no amenities of any kind. My father's wash-basin was a pail, his toilet the open *machair*. His drinking water was drawn from a common well.

His father was a crofter, Angus MacVicar of Claddach, Kirkibost, who lived like his neighbours at subsistence level. Indian meal porridge was the staple diet. Fruit and vegetables were almost unknown. A little kale might be grown for winter broth, and at Christmas and New Year a loaf of white bread and a few apples might be bought as a treat for the young ones. "We liked the bread best", my father used to say. "Especially when jam was available."

It goes without saying that Hebridean children of that benighted age were denied the benefit of organised games. And yet those who survived the spartan conditions had their own outdoor pastimes and grew strong and lusty in spite of the smoke-filled houses and meagre diet.

In his book, *Hebridean Heritage* (now out of print), my father wrote: "We boys, when we could get a ball, played a primitive form of rounders in summer and in winter a kind of shinty. North Uist being treeless, there were no decent *camans* to be had; but necessity was the mother of invention, and we picked up planks on the shore and with our knives shaped them into shinty-sticks."

I have often heard him describe those boyhood games of shinty, when rules went by the board and the players would frequently run home to their mothers, sobbing over bruised knees and lacerated heads.

When he was sixteen he won a bursary of £15 a year and went as a pupil to the secondary school at Kingussie. At the end of last century, when the State was only beginning to take an interest in ordinary individuals — except when it wanted them for the Army or Navy — this money was administered by the Church, which, through the dark ages, was the only source of education for those whom we now call underprivileged.

Kingussie was — and still is — a great stronghold of shinty. In 1898, when my father was at school there, Kingussie won the Camanachd Cup, the first Club to win that coveted trophy. The members of the team were all great heroes to the schoolboys, and it was at this stage that my father's love of shinty became firmly established.

He lived in lodgings, sharing a room with a fellow-pupil for which they both paid half-a-crown a week. They bought their own food. The house had no toilet, and water came from a pump in the street. Thanks to the shinty, however, my father grew like a young deer in his new environment.

"At school we were kept hard at it," he wrote, "and often worked into the small hours of the morning at our lessons. Many of us had to make up for lost time and wasted opportunities. But it was not altogether a matter of all work and no play. We took time off to engage in shinty matches with the local lads, often in the street out of sight of the police. On Saturday afternoons those of us who were keen on the game joined the local senior team at their practices on the banks of the Spey."

When he went to Glasgow, to study for the ministry, my father found to his disappointment that the University had no shinty team. So much did he miss playing the game he loved that eventually he joined Glasgow Cowal, which, every Saturday afternoon, held practices at Strathbungo.

Then an idea began to burgeon in his mind. There was a University shinty team in Edinburgh and one in Aberdeen. Why not one in Glasgow?

"That was a question," he wrote, "which I frequently discussed with other Highland students. One evening at the beginning of the 1901 session I happened to meet in the town Murdo MacRae and Murdo MacKenzie, two medical students from Ross-shire. On our way home to our lodgings we dropped into a public-house at the corner of Park Road and Gibson Street. Over a drink in the taproom we discussed the possibility of forming a University shinty team and there and then decided to call a public meeting of all the Highland students so that the matter might be put to them. We approached Walter Shaw, a native of Sutherland and well-known in University circles, and he agreed to preside.

"What a meeting that was! What enthusiasm! The largest room in the Union was filled to capacity, many having to stand round the walls. Shaw made an ideal chairman. He explained the object of the gathering and appealed to the Highland sentiment of the students, calling on them to be true to the customs of their race. Finally it was moved and seconded that a University Shinty Club be formed, and this was carried with acclamation. Then patrons were suggested and office-bearers appointed. The secretary was instructed to appeal for funds, and I was elected as first captain of the team.

"We had no ground of our own, but the city clubs gave us every encouragement and allowed us to practice on their pitches at Strathbungo, Govan and Ruchill. Our first game was a Saturday afternoon friendly with Glasgow Cowal at Strathbungo. To the surprise of everyone we played excellent shinty and in the first half there was no scoring. In the second half, however, the Cowal boys showed their superior fitness and we were defeated though not disgraced. The want of training was always our weakness, as we had no one to coach us."

Soon after the Club was formed a Glasgow publican, John Littlejohn, presented a trophy — the Littlejohn Cup — to be competed for each session among the shinty teams of the three Universities. Glasgow won that cup for the first time in 1906, the year my father left.

Glasgow University Shinty Club has gone from strength to strength since its inception. Its motto is a quotation from an Ossianic poem: *'S iad a Chuireadh an lomain 'S a ruitheadh i gu teann Cho luath ri buie Earba Measg gharbhlaich nam beann.* ("It is they who would play the shinty and contest it with vigour, as fleet as the roe bucks on the rough mountainside.")

Not long before he died, my father presented to Glasgow University a framed photograph of their first shinty team. He himself, as Captain, sits in the front row sporting a Kitchener of Khartoum moustache. He looks a tough guy, and it seems he was just that, always ready to fly off the handle if foiled by an opponent. But I like to remember that even St Columba found it hard to maintain a Christian attitude when somebody struck him on the ankle with a *caman*.

RING OUT WILD BELLS

by

K. A. MacMASTER

One of the most pleasant memories of Old-Timers is of the type of opponent who gave no quarter during the game but who, when it was over, was the best of companions.

Such a one was Colin. As I write this there is taking place all that is left of the once famous Northern Meeting — Piping Competitions. Forty years ago two full days and nights were taken up with all kinds of sport and the Balls.

Included in the Programme on one of the days was a Shinty six-a-side Tournament to which were invited the four most successful teams of the preceding Season in the North.

We were fortunate in being invited several times, on one of which we reached the Final with Lovat.

We won and received Wristlet Watches for first prize — Lovat being awarded Alarm Clocks.

Later in the evening when strolling about the town, prior to going to the Pictures, we met some of the Lovat Team.

One of them, I think it was George Anderson, was carrying two small parcels. "We are going to the Pictures", he said, "We are waiting for Colin". "This is his clock I have here."

Suddenly someone said "What about setting Colin's clock to go off in the middle of the Picture". Oh, an excellent idea. Approved by everyone.

The parcel was opened, the clock set to go off at the appropriate time and then carefully retied. Everything went according to plan.

Colin's wrath and embarrassment as he frantically tried to get at the offending article can well be imagined, but fortunately it was dark in the Picture House.

He took it all in the right spirit and when I reminded him of the incident was quite agreeable to my telling the story.

May Colin MacRae be long spared to instil into his players his sense of Sportsmanship and Loyalty to his Club.

Footnote. Ken MacMaster of Strathpeffer was a leading player with Caber-feidh in their golden era in the 1930s. He has worked as hard off the field as he did on it and he is now President of the Camanachd Association.

His former sparring partner on the field, Colin MacRae, is now President of the Lovat Club and is an ex President of the North of Scotland Shinty Association.

SHINTY IN NEWTONMORE THROUGH THE AGES

by

ANGUS BAIN

Since the formation of the Camanachd Association in 1893 the village of Newtonmore has always played a prominent part in the ancient and historic game of shinty and from time to time has produced many famous teams.

It is noteworthy that families and brothers have always been outstanding in the winning teams and the village team, prior to the Great War, fielded the finest caman player of all time, in my opinion — the late Dr. Johnnie Cattanaich.

Dr. Johnnie, like many of his fellow players, was killed in France but his amazing skill with the caman will always be remembered.

One of his greatest achievements was scoring 8 goals in a Camanachd Cup Final.

Many of those noted players were tradesmen — masons, joiners, slaters, etc., and helped to build many of the fine houses and hotels for which Badenoch is noted.

During the winter when building work was not possible, everyone played shinty on the historic Eilan — one of the oldest playing fields in the Highlands.

Two of the original stone pillars which marked the field of play still remain.

The old boundaries of play were very much larger than today with many more players taking part and the duration of the games much longer often involving contests between the neighbouring parishes with the traditional refreshments on the field of play.

Camans were home produced, mainly from the local Birch, and the ball was much heavier than the one in use today, being made almost entirely from Horse Hair.

It is also noteworthy that Newtonmore has nearly always fielded a team of local boys.

Unfortunately, during the 1920-30 period an amalgamation took place between Kingussie and Newtonmore.

After a two year trial both reverted to fielding a full side and the local rivalry and keen competition has helped to maintain a high standard of shinty in Badenoch.

Today, rising costs of camans and travelling expenses pose a problem, but with a very talented and energetic Entertainments Committee the Newtonmore Club is in a good financial position and is able to field 3 teams — Senior, Junior and Juvenile.

The school team has always been prominent and we believe that coaching in the schools is essential.

At present Newtonmore has plenty of shinty talent and will always be able to field a formidable team and strive to maintain the high traditions of our grand old national game.

Footnote. Angus Bain is a former Newtonmore player and athlete of note and is now chieftain of the club.

EXTRACTS FROM THE MINUTE BOOKS OF THE CAMANACHD ASSOCIATION

by

ALASDAIR MACINTYRE

On going over the old Minute Books of the Camanachd Association there appears some most interesting items which will appeal to present day players and shinty followers.

Slating of the pitch – and the referee

On 23rd December, 1922 a Scottish Cup Fixture took place between Ballachulish and Inveraray on the former's pitch and which Ballachulish won by 3 - 2.

Apparently the weather before and during the game was on its worst behaviour and in order to enable the game to be played, all the pools of water around and in front of the north end goal had been filled up with slate refuse, making the field appear playable.

As the game progressed, playing conditions deteriorated and at one end the pitch became a veritable quagmire and all the sawdust lines around goal, including the offside circle, were completely obliterated. Although Ballachulish were leading by 3 goals to 2, the Inveraray team put on the pressure in order at least to equalise, but according to a protest lodged by the Inveraray club to the effect that each time their forwards got possession of the ball near the Ballachulish goal and in a position to score the goal judge (being local) waved his handkerchief to signal that the forwards were offside and it will be appreciated that no lines or markings could be seen to indicate whether a player was offside or not. Such was the rivalry between Clubs in those days that to find a local goal judge who would be neutral was well nigh impossible.

The Inveraray Club protested to the Association afterwards but the Referee's report stating that the field was playable was accepted.

A challenge – 100 years ago

(Cutting from "The Lennox Herald" 11th January 1869)

Sir,

Owing to the success that the Glenfruin players met with in the late contest with the Gareloch men we are glad to understand that they are anxious to have a match with the Vale of Leven players. If so, we will be happy to meet them at an early date and arrange a match with them and, should they wish, we will play with 20 men against their 25. An early answer, through the Herald, will much oblige.

Signed Robert McGown
Alexandria

The widespread nature of the game in 1895

Away back in 1895 it is most interesting to find Clubs entering for the Camanachd Cup such as Glengarry, Alvie, Strathspey, Insh, Invergarry, London Camanachd, Laggan, Grantown, Nairn, Glasgow Cowal, Rogart, Falkirk, Lairg, Perth, Gleann Mor (presumably a Skye Club) along with Portree and Edinbane and also Island of Skye, and at a much earlier date one of the most outstanding teams, namely, the Vale of Leven, along with the present day notable clubs.

It would be a great asset to the shinty world if interest could be revived in the places mentioned.

Gamesmanship?

A well known player who played full back for Inveraray from 1922 to 1932 and who, unfortunately, has departed this life never took much honour from the fact that during his playing days his immediate opponent from various teams did not score many goals. In fact this full back was considered to be one of the best in the game and was greatly admired for his sportsmanship. He had never been reprimanded by a Referee. On his retirement from the game he was asked about his success as a full back and he admitted that having plenty of speed and lots of shinty he always kept very close to his opponent. When the ball came their way and just when they were both going to intercept it, the opponent gave up owing to a very sharp pain below his heart. The full back gripped his caman about 5 inches from the top and as he and his opponent were making contact with the ball, the full back gave his opponent a sharp jab below the heart with his stick, which winded him. This was what one would call "true sportsmanship" and he got away with it.

SHINTY IN GLASGOW 35 YEARS AGO

by

HUME D. ROBERTSON

(Extract of an article published in the now defunct weekly
'The Glasgow Highlander' on September 12th, 1936)

In addition to Skye and Inverness-shire, the other Glasgow teams are Mid-Argyll and University. Until a few years ago, thanks mainly to the efforts of John Gemmell, than whom no finer wielder of a caman has adorned Glasgow shinty, Cowal took their place among city teams. Unfortunately, owing to lack of players, the club was forced to disband. It is to be hoped that the Cowal Club, with its fine record, and representing that nursery of talented players, Kames, will soon be revived.

On last season's form, the outstanding city team was Mid-Argyll. We have to thank this team for upholding the prestige of Glasgow shinty by winning the Celtic Society Cup and incidentally defeating Oban Camanachd by four clear goals. Although Skye and Inverness-shire have both won the Celtic Cup in recent years, the city teams usually go under when they meet the crack teams from the West, and not for many years has a Glasgow team reached the last four in the Scottish championship.

The main competition engaged in by the city teams is the Southern League, which, in addition to the Glasgow teams, includes North Bute, Edinburgh Camanachd and Edinburgh University. North Bute and Edinburgh Camanachd were last year's leaders. Another competition engaged in is that for the Skeabost Horn, which Glasgow University presently holds. The Ian Chisholm Cup for reserve players is held by Glasgow Skye.

The finest display of shinty I have ever seen was given by Caberfeidh and Newtonmore in the semi-final of the Scottish Championship at Inverness in 1929. The game ended in a draw of two goals each, but, if anything, the more brilliant play came from Caberfeidh. I mention this because, not many years previously, Caberfeidh was of small account in first-class shinty. However, thanks to great enthusiasm and persistent systematic training, Caberfeidh became and still are one of the very finest teams in the country.

Unfortunately, similar enthusiasm is lacking among our Glasgow players, with the result that the average standard of play is poor. Shinty is not a game that can be mastered in a season.

I know of no game that demands a greater degree of skill. It requires no mean ability to deal lightning strokes on the small ball at so many different angles in the ground, in the air, whilst stationary and whilst speeding over the turf. Shinty, when played well, is a very fast game. It requires quickness of

eye and sureness of aim. It demands physical fitness and mental acuteness of no mean order, and it also calls for perfect control of temper.

It will be easily realised that without training and regular practice it is almost impossible to master the various aspects of the game. The game demands a thoroughness of preparation that the average city player cannot or will not give it.

Footnote. Mr. Hume D. Robertson is an ex President of both the North of Scotland Shinty Association and the Camanachd Association. A son of Skye, he has now returned there to spend a well earned retirement after a notable career in the teaching profession.

WILLIAM BATCHEN, REFEREE EXTRAORDINARY

by

JOHN W. CAMPBELL



Willie Batchen displays the trophies which he has collected over the years as a top class referee.

When the new shinty season 1971 - 72 commenced on 18th September, Willie Batchen embarked on his 25th year of shinty refereeing, a feat of which he can indeed be very proud; for in that time he has picked up every major honour that a shinty referee can be awarded. Yet, at the outset, football nearly lured him away. The late Angus Forbes, representative of the North of Scotland Football Association to the Scottish Football Association, approached him to take up football refereeing as a career. However, after much deliberation, Willie decided to remain in shinty just for the love of the game and its amateur status. In doing this, he followed in his father's foot-

steps, who had completed 20 years' top class shinty refereeing, but for some obscure reason had not the great honour of refereeing a Camanachd Cup Final.

As a boy, Willie Batchen played for his home team, Boleskine, in goal. In 1938, he was selected as goalkeeper for the North against the South in a representative match. As is customary with most shinty players, they are also excellent footballers, as was first demonstrated by the Vale of Leven shinty team who won the Scottish Football Cup in 1876 - 79. Willie was no exception and in 1938 joined up with Inverness Caledonian as an inside forward. He stayed with them till 1944. Thereafter, he had two seasons with Clachnacuddin, and then one season with Nairn County. In 1947, he returned to his native game and once again played in goal for Boleskine. However, when Boleskine reduced their status to junior, this ruled him out of shinty playing so he turned to refereeing.

Season 1950 - 51 saw Willie Batchen come through to big time refereeing, when he gained his first senior medal refereeing the MacTavish Cup Final between Newtonmore and Lovat, which Newtonmore won in a replay. He also refereed the MacGillivray Senior League Final that year, which was contested by the same teams. Newtonmore won this game also. A controversy arose out of these finals which nearly caused Willie to give up refereeing, but, fortunately, on the advice of friends, who asked him to emulate his father, Willie carried on and the game of shinty is much the better off today for that decision.

Season 1951 - 52 was a lean year in which Willie strove to improve his control of the game. He went to the extent of having neutral spectators at half-time and full-time criticise his control of the match. From this sometime adverse criticism, Willie learned the hard way and thus came through to be the top referee in Scotland.

Season 1952 - 53 saw him back in the top honours again and in 1954 he refereed his first Camanachd Cup Final, which was between Oban Celtic and Newtonmore, the former winning 4 - 1. That same year, he refereed his first MacAulay Cup Final. He is the only referee ever to have refereed three Camanachd Cup Finals. He has refereed all the various finals in shinty to the extent that he now holds over fifty medals, a Dewar Shield plaque, a Grampian plaque, a Cairngorm stone for a MacPherson gathering, a Frew Trophy tankard, cuff links, and even a set of cutlery.

He has many memories of various escapades during and after matches and the one which stands out above the rest is told as follows.

Following a Newtonmore v Kingussie derby, of which he has refereed more than any other referee, he gave a lift to an elderly gentleman just outside Newtonmore on his homeward journey. The gentleman asked Willie if he had been to the game. Willie replied that he was. The conversation immediately turned to the game and especially concerning the referee. Willie did not let on

who he was. The gentleman said that a young chap Batchen was refereeing but that he would never be like his father. For the next few minutes, egged on by Willie, the topic was the referee. On reaching near Aviemore, the gentleman got out and extended his hand asking who he was to thank for the lift. The reply was, "Just thank the referee who will never be like his father."

Footnote. John Campbell is a native of Skye, but is now employed in Inverness as Assistant Headmaster at the Crown School. He is the hard working Secretary of the North of Scotland Shinty Association.

LEAGUE PLACINGS 1970-71

MACGILLIVRAY SENIOR LEAGUE

NORTH LEAGUE	P	W	D	L	For	Agst.	Pts.
Lochcarron	8	7	1	0	42	12	15
Glenurquhart	7	4	2	1	26	16	10
Caberfeidh	8	4	0	4	24	24	8
Inverness	7	2	1	4	14	25	5
Strathglass	8	0	0	8	14	43	0

SOUTH LEAGUE

Newtonmore	8	7	1	0	30	5	15
Kingussie	8	6	0	2	32	10	12
Beauly	8	2	2	4	16	22	6
Kilmallie	8	3	0	5	12	29	6
Lovat	8	0	1	7	9	33	1

FINAL Newtonmore 3 Lochcarron 1

MACGILLIVRAY JUNIOR LEAGUE

District No. 1	P	W	D	L	For	Agst.	Pts.
Caberfeidh	6	4	0	2	16	14	8
Kinlochshiel	6	3	2	1	26	18	8
Skye	6	2	1	3	15	22	5
Lochcarron	6	1	1	4	18	21	3

In a play-off, Caberfeidh beat Kinlochshiel 3 - 1

District No. 2

Ballachulish	8	8	0	0	56	7	16
Caol	8	5	0	3	27	18	10
Lochaber	7	4	0	3	25	37	8
Fort William	7	1	0	6	16	39	2
Kilmallie	6	0	0	6	2	25	0

District No. 3

Newtonmore	5	5	0	0	30	7	10
Lovat	6	3	0	3	16	12	6
Beauly	5	1	0	4	6	20	2
Kingussie	4	1	0	3	8	21	2

District No. 4

Aberdeen University	5	4	0	1	22	14	8
Boleskine	6	3	1	2	27	19	7
Aberdeen Camanachd	6	2	2	2	23	24	6
Glenurquhart	5	0	1	4	10	25	1

SEMI-FINALS Ballachulish 5 Aberdeen University 1

Caberfeidh 3 Newtonmore 6

FINAL Ballachulish 4 Newtonmore 1

SHINTY HONOURS LIST

Season 1970-71

Senior

Camanachd Cup (Scottish Champions)	Newtonmore
Glasgow Celtic Society Cup	Glasgow Mid Argyll
MacTavish Cup	Newtonmore
MacAulay Cup	Kyles Athletic
Torlundy Cup	Oban Camanachd
Dewar Shield	Boleskine
Dunn League	Inveraray
Frew Cup	Glasgow Mid Argyll
MacGillivray League	Newtonmore
Skeabost Horn	Glasgow Inverness-shire
Aviemore Cup (Mod Cup)	Oban Celtic
Grampian Trophy	Central District
Royal Highland Show Trophy	Kyles Athletic

Junior

Sutherland Cup (Scottish Champions)	Ballachulish
Strathdearn Cup	Ballachulish
Glen Mhor Cup	Lochaber
MacGillivray League	Ballachulish
Fraser Cup	Glasgow Police
Bullough Cup	Lochside Rovers

Junior (Reserves)

North East League	Aberdeen Camanachd
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Universities

Littlejohn Vase	Aberdeen University
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Juvenile

W.J. Cameron Trophy	Lovat
MacTavish Cup	Lovat
MacBean Cup	Lochaber High School
Murchison Cup	Lochaber High School

Schoolboys (under 15)

MacPherson Cup	Lochaber High School
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Schoolboys (under 12)

MacKay Cup	Cruachanside
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INVERNESS SHINTY CLUB

The new coaching scheme for schoolboys in Inverness will be greatly welcomed by the local club. Subsequent to their great achievement in winning the Camanachd Cup in 1952, the Inverness club have found it difficult from time to time to field a team, being dependent on players coming to live in the town from shinty playing areas. However, invariably, they have overcome the odds and can be expected to spring surprise results from time to time against much more fancied teams.

Still on 'active service' are some of the players who took the Camanachd Cup to Inverness for the first time almost 20 years ago. Their player pool in 1970-71 was as follows:

Roddy Gordon, Louis Stewart, Dave MacMillan, Hugh Tyroney, Angus Macinnes, Willie Grant, Arthur Ferguson, George Tyroney, Willie Mackintosh, Dennis Swanson, Hugh Grant, Willie Kennedy, Francis Norris, David Glass and Alistair Nicolson.

And when times are hard, personalities such as President Tom MacKenzie will think nothing of donning a red jersey just to make up the 12. That's the sort of club they are, always willing to make a game of it and always a pleasure to play against. Both committee members and players deserve great credit for their efforts to keep the game alive in the town.

It is to be fervently hoped that the newly initiated coaching scheme will bear fruit and that, before long, the Camanachd Cup will be nestling on the Bught sideboard again.

CELTIC SOCIETY CUP WINNERS

The Celtic Society Cup Competition, the oldest in the game, was won in 1970-71 by Glasgow Mid Argyll. In the final they got the better of a gallant Inveraray team, but only after extra time, the final score being 8 - 4. The Mid Argyll scorers were - D. Cameron (3), I. MacKenzie (2), D. Skinner, I. Cameron and R. MacMillan, while A. Blyth (3) and E. MacPherson scored for Inveraray.

The winning team was as follows: A. Ferguson; D. MacNiven, J. MacFarlane; A. Keatings (Capt.), I. Cameron; K. MacNiven, D. Skinner, G. Menzies; R. MacMillan, A. Forbes; D. Cameron, I. MacKenzie. Sub.: L. Duncan. Referee: W. Davidson, Edinburgh.



Caman wielders of a past era — the Strathdearn Cup winning Foyers team of 1912. Oh, for some of these whip like and tough looking camans today!

Back: John (Brisk) Fraser, Angie Kennedy, Alick McLaren

Middle: Col. Laughton, Alistair Dow, Duncan (Slash) McDonald, Duncan Cameron

Front: John McInnes, James (Swallow) Fraser, Duncan (Birch) McDonald, Charlie McMillan, Alick (Caber) McKenzie



The justifiably proud lads of the Kyle of Lochalsh Primary School team after their victory in the A.R. MacKenzie Cup competition at the Ross-shire six-a-side tournament played at Castle Leod, Strathpeffer in July.



It's 2 against 3. Veteran Glen Urquhart defenders Stewart and Fraser (3rd and 4th left) strive to stem a Kingussie attack in the quarter final of the Camanachd Cup. Kingussie players are (L. to R.) Grant, Anderson and George MacPherson.



Kingussie defence in confusion during a Glen Urquhart attack in the Camanachd Cup quarter final tie. Glen players are A. Mackintosh (third left) and MacLeod (extreme right) and Kingussie's (L. to R.) are Begg, Muir, goalkeeper McKenna and I. Ross.



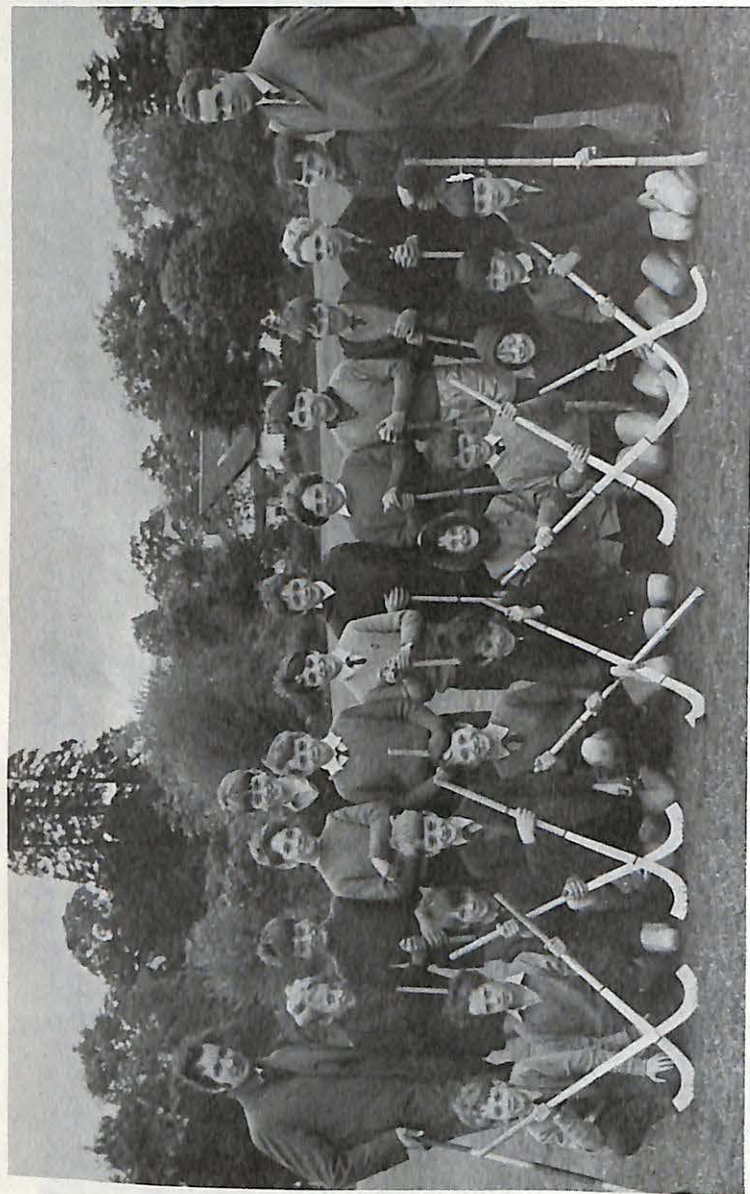
The Lochcarron Senior team who have proved that they are a match for the best.
Back row (L. to R.) J. Cushnie, W. MacKenzie, R. MacLennan, C. MacKenzie, K. MacKenzie, H. Matheson, A. MacKenzie
Front row: M. MacLean, K. Cameron, T. MacKenzie, C. MacAskill, I. Matheson, R. Ross



Action from the 1971 Camanachd Cup Final at Inverness. Kyles Athletic goalkeeper Paterson just manages to foil the eager Ralph of Newtonmore with Black covering up.



More action from the 1971 Camanachd Cup Final. Kyles Jamieson (partly hidden) and full back Irvine (No. 2) in a joust with Newtonmore forwards Stewart (No. 11) and Campbell (No. 12).



Keen looking youngsters from the Crown School, Inverness, showing obvious pride in their new camans. Coach Donald Grant, Kingussie (left) and Mr. J.W. Campbell, Assistant Headmaster at the Crown and Secretary of the North of Scotland Shinty Association, are doing some very worthwhile work with the boys.

SHINTY IN THE UNIVERSITIES

by

JOHNDA BYRNE

The Aberdeen University Shinty Club was probably formed in 1905 — the year in which the University was presented with the Littlejohn Vase by Littlejohn of Invercharron to encourage the “manly sport” in the Universities. This trophy, insured for £1000, is now played for by the four Universities, St. Andrews, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen, on a home and away league basis, and is at present held by Aberdeen.

University shinty received a boost four years ago with the re-forming of the St. Andrews side which had been in abeyance for many years. They are, in many ways, the most remarkable side in Scotland. They have a hard core of about three to four players with a lifetime's experience of the game while the remainder are either Englishmen or Americans with experience of cricket and baseball respectively. Shinty in the Winter and cricket in the Summer prove very complementary, both games demanding a keen eye and good judgment. They take their shinty seriously and show remarkable enthusiasm and no mean skill.

The Glasgow University Club, the crack side in University shinty in the 1950s, have fallen on somewhat hard times, but alternating cycles of good and bad fortune are characteristic of University shinty and the Glasgow boys will, undoubtedly, be winning the Littlejohn again before long.

Throughout the 1960s, Aberdeen and Edinburgh have vied for the ultimate prize with honours fairly even. The Edinburgh team, always with a good representation of boys from central and Wester Ross and Argyll, have maintained a consistently high standard in the last decade.

In the last few years, the Aberdeen University side have been emerging as not only a force to be reckoned with in University circles but also in North Junior shinty. They suffered only four defeats last season, two of which were in the semi finals of the MacGillivray League and Strathdearn Cup competitions. The oldest player in the side being 20, this was certainly an achievement of considerable merit. With a player pool of about 30, they are certainly in a healthy state. Their reserves have their own competition, participating with St. Andrews University and Aberdeen Camanachd Reserves in the North East League competition which was initiated two seasons ago. Incidentally, the talk of possible formation of a club in Perth has created some excitement among the teams already participating in the North East League and the entry of a Perth team would be greatly welcomed.

If asked what typifies University shinty, I would say enthusiasm and travelling. Enthusiasm among the players runs very high in every University

shinty club — it has to as there are so many other clubs and societies which players may join. Also the club depends heavily on the players to run it, for unlike most other shinty clubs all the organisation is carried out by the players themselves. This is very time-encroaching, involving much telephoning and bus riding in the cities, organising games, transport, ceilidhs and seeing to all other tasks involved in the running of a club.

Travel is another aspect of University shinty, and I think Aberdeen University can claim to be the most travelled shinty club in Scotland — travel which included a trip to Ireland two years ago and which regularly means Edinburgh, St. Andrews, Glasgow, Fort William, Inverness, Newtonmore, at least once a season.

In University shinty, especially, the new season is eagerly awaited — to renew acquaintances with team-mates, to size up new talent among first year students, to meet old friends-cum-enemies when the “battles” resume, to hold post mortems after matches on what went according to plan and what did not and, in general, to talk about the game, its traditions, the enjoyment it gives and the relief it provides from the stress of studying Logic, Psychology, Chemistry and what have you.

Footnote. Johnda Byrne is a native of Wester Ross. He captained the Aberdeen University side in season 1970-71 and was awarded his Full Blue.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SPORT IN ST. ANDREWS

by

GEOFFREY GARNER

Shinty has not been going long in St. Andrews. Indeed, the University club was only formed in the summer term of 1967, by a group of medical students, as the “in” thing to do. They allegedly scraped a win against Aberdeen University 2nd XII at home, probably due to their basic hockey-style which must have overawed the opposition, who would, in any case, have been pretty makeshift by the third term. They were, however, soundly beaten in their other games.

The following season, 1967-8, saw the club better established, and in 1968-9, the captain and secretary, both having played before, were non-medics. Medics still played, travelling across from Dundee, after the splitting up of the Universities of St. Andrews and Dundee. However, interest waned when the club had to travel. Nevertheless, the side was a good one, witnessed by a very narrow 5 - 4 defeat by the formidable Aberdeen University first team and a 5 - 3 defeat of Edinburgh at home. In that season, Allan Macinnes, secretary, was named substitute for the Scottish Universities Select and subsequently played.

1969-70 saw Macinnes as captain of the club and of the Scottish Universities side. It also saw the first large influx of English ex-hockey players. However, despite these, the team won 7 - 0 at home against Glasgow University, and drew 1 - 1 away with the Aberdeen 1st team.

Last season saw a continued interest from the nucleus of players, although no great support from the new members of the University. Indeed, at times it was difficult to field a side.

The English influence is still here. It is probably a fact that Scottish sportsmen are hardier than their English counterparts. The reason, then, for the large percentage of English players here, apart from a lack of experienced shinty players, lies in a general (and understandable) dissatisfaction with hockey and its many restrictions. The club does all it can to attract Sassenachs to the game, since they provide its main support. To quote from this year's publicity campaign:

“Yes: it's all ‘go’ in the St. Andrews University Shinty Club! Trevor Hicks was an 18 year old country yokel from Somerset when he joined the club; now, at the age of only 20, he's a captain who has travelled to the very limits of civilisation, stretching from the icy wastes of Aberdeen, within the Arctic Circle, to the sun-kissed beaches and blue lagoons of the Isle of Bute.

“However, membership of such an elite corps, though a unique achievement, is not exclusive. On the contrary, we in the shinty club are found to be

sympathetic to even the most uncivilised aliens, as can be proved by the high proportion of English and even American members. There are even one or two former hockey players — living proof that the effeminate traits instilled by that “sport” can be checked, if detected early enough.

“Yet, surprisingly, this strange assortment of players have fitted together to form a team whose cohesion and morale have led to an amazing series of defeats climaxed by a 16 - 1 annihilation in the spring of 1971. Yet, like the phoenix, we hope to rise again from the ashes.”

And so we do! At least the game is still practised in St. Andrews, which is probably the main thing.

Footnote. Geoffrey Garner, an Englishman and a top class cricketer, is the enthusiastic Secretary of the cosmopolitan bunch of young men who are making such commendable efforts to establish the game in their University.

PERSONALITY PARADE



1. DONNIE GRANT

1. Club Kingussie
2. Age 32
3. Number of years with present club
17 — Though I had two spells in Highland League Football during that time.
4. Team position
I have played in every position except goalkeeper, but I prefer centre-forward.

5. Where did you first play shinty?

In Primary School at Kingussie.

6. What was your most memorable game?

Kingussie's Camanachd Cup Final Victory of 1961.

It was Kingussie's first Camanachd Final appearance for 40 years and we were against the top team of that time Oban Celtic, who had opened the scoring. Then goals by myself and A. Borthwick put us in front and a great team performance, especially from our defence, gave us victory by 2 - 1.

7. Who is the best opponent you have faced?

A difficult question, but I would say Donald McCallum, Oban Celtic.

8. What was your most disappointing moment in shinty?

To have been Captain of Kingussie in 1963 when we lost the Camanachd Cup Final 3 - 2 to Oban Celtic.

9. What changes do you feel are required to improve the game?

I would like to see the Camanachd Cup an open draw from the first round and the North League split in two divisions with promotion and relegation to stimulate greater interest in both players and spectators.

10. Who do you consider is the most promising young player that you have played against this season?

Rory Cameron, Beauly.

11. What are your other sporting activities and hobbies?

Football, Golf and Badminton.

12. Have you any unfulfilled ambitions in shinty?

To be "capped" for Scotland v. Ireland in a Shinty/Hurling International.



2. IAN IRVINE

1. Club Kyles Athletic

2. Age 32

3. Number of years with present club 17

4. Team position Goal or Full Back

5. Where did you first play shinty? At school in Tighnabruaich

6. What was your most memorable game?

The replayed game in the 1968 Camanachd Cup Final between Kyles and Kingussie. In the first game at Fort William Kingussie were leading 3 - 2 with 10 minutes to go. In desperation, I was shifted to full forward and with time running out I managed to score the equaliser, thus forcing a replay.

In the second game at Oban, we managed to win 2 - 1 after a very hard game. This time, however, I did not have to move from 'between the sticks'.

7. Who is the best opponent you have faced?

During 17 years in Senior Shinty I have crossed camans with many fine players but Donnie Campbell, Inveraray, in his day was hard to beat.

8. What was your most disappointing moment in shinty?

Being ruled out of the Scottish Cup Final against Newtonmore in 1959 at Glasgow because of a damaged knee.

9. What changes do you feel are required to improve the game?

Some rule should be phrased so that Juniors could have a longer run of games with the Senior team before they are committed. There are many youngsters who take longer than two or three games to settle down in the Senior Grade.

10. Who do you consider is the most promising young player that you have played against this season?

Alastair Laurie, who played for Oban Celtic against us in a Friendly Match.

11. What are your other sporting activities and hobbies?

Sailing, Golf and Badminton.

12. Have you any unfulfilled ambitions in shinty?

Shinty has been very good to me over the years and I obtained tremendous enjoyment from the sport. Further ambitions? — perhaps the winning of a silver mounted caman — but then you can't have everything.



3. ROBERT GALBRAITH

1. Club Oban Camanachd

2. Age 37

3. Number of years with present club 23

4. Team position

In all positions but mostly Half Back and now Goalkeeper.

5. Where did you first play shinty?

In Oban, for the Sorobians under 14 side. I played in 3 MacAulay Cup Winning teams.

6. What was your most memorable game?

The 1952 Final of the Macaulay Cup where I won my first Senior Medal. We defeated Newtonmore 5 - 1.

7. Who is the best opponent you have faced?
Johnny Campbell (Newtonmore).
8. What was your most disappointing moment in shinty?
Losing the 1958 Scottish Cup Final to Newtonmore 3 - 1 at Inverness. I captained Camanachd that day.
9. What changes do you feel are required to improve the game?
To have more consistent refereeing and have more uniform interpretation of Rules in South and North.
10. Who do you consider is the most promising young player that you have played against this season?
John Fraser of Newtonmore.
11. What are your other sporting activities and hobbies?
Football and Fishing.
12. Have you any unfulfilled ambitions in shinty?
To win the Scottish Cup.

A correspondent sums up Robert Galbraith, who is a master joiner, as follows:

Fair curly hair — 5' 6" tall and slimly built. He has played in every position in the team for his club and county. He is not tall and not heavily built but has the heart of a lion and courage and tenacity of a tiger — the most vital qualities on the Shinty Field.

He would like to be remembered as a good and fair sportsman, who always likes good shinty being played, but hates ungentlemanly conduct of any kind, but is never the one to wilt against such tactics. An excellent example for the youngsters in the Oban Camanachd team with him now.

THE SENIOR STARS OF TOMORROW

Pools of Players in School Shinty 1970-71

MacKay Cup (under 12 years of age)

Glen Urquhart S.S. School

D. MacDonald, R. Surtees, D. Fraser, A. MacLean, A.I. Fraser, A. Shaw, A. Cameron, D. MacLean, S. Fraser, G. Young, I. Cameron, G. Lumsden, A. MacKenzie, J. Surtees

Newtonmore

N. MacArthur, A. MacRae, J. Russell, R. Richardson, W. Menzies, N. Barnett, G. Kennedy, R. Ross, M. Ralph, L. Anderson, E. Smith, G. Campbell, P. Campbell, D. Philip

Inverlochy

G. Reid, S. Cameron, A. Cameron, J. Ferguson, I. MacInnes, J. Cuthbertson, B. Buchanan, P. Hepburn, J. Clark, D.J. MacDonald, W. MacDiarmid, N. MacKinnon, M. Mackay

Tomnacross Primary School

R. Reed, I. Mackinnon, S. MacLean, D. Urquhart, W. Matheson, L. Millar, A. Cumming, J. Matheson, A. Nairne, C. MacKenzie, I. Dunnett, B. Murray, I. Ferguson, I. Urquhart

Lochfyneside

N. MacDonald, A. Finlayson, A. Aitken, J. Lindsay, S. Bell, A. Smeaton, J. Munro, R. Anderson, N. Anderson, T. Blackwood, G. Robertson, R. Smyllie, D. Kennedy, D. MacMillan, H. McInnes, T. Sturrock

Beaully

G. Ross, C. Ross, T. Bell, E. Mellis, D. Newlands, J. Smith, F. Ross, A. Cormack, E. Rait, D. MacDonald, D. Stewart, D. Bain, G. Dennison

Cruachanside

C. Mitchell, H. Matheson, K. Matheson, A. Wylie, A. Donald, I. Livingstone, J. Smith, J. MacDougall, N. MacRae, G. Girvan, W. Stark, E. Brown, G. Smith

Winners: Cruachanside

Runners Up: Newtonmore

MacPherson Cup Competition (under 15 years of age)

Glen Urquhart S.S. School

R. Tough, J. Jack, G. Macdonald, C. Mackay, A. Taylor, A. Robertson, N. Cameron, G. Robertson, R. Cameron, A. Duff, R. Collis, J. Hutchison, R. Morrison

Inverness High School

G. Mackenzie, S. Steel, A. Anderson, A. Mackinnon, J. Macpherson, R. Ross, J. Urquhart, D. Brown, S. Mackay, R. Smith, A. Fraser, L. Stewart, D. Macdonald, A. Kzmicki, D. Connell, J. Newlands

Kingussie Secondary School

M. Chisholm, T. Gallagher, A. Fraser, I. Richardson, J. Finlayson, G. Gow, A. Binnie, R. Sharp, G. McDonald, C. McDonald, G. Dallas, D. Thomson, G. McPherson

Dunoon Grammar School

'A' Team

R. Eccleson, J. Simpson, R. Irvine, T. Baxter, Andrew MacDonald, Alastair MacDonald, C. MacDonald, C. McColl, G. Hendry, A. Blair, R. Black, P. Turner, A. Kerr

'B' Team

E. Mitchell, A. Malcolm, G. Smith, K. Neill, M. Diamond, J. Barron, A. MacLeod, S. MacIntyre, J. Neill, I. Smith, D. Lamb, J. MacMillan, D. McHugh

Lochaber High School

G. Mackay, D. Hay, J. MacMillan, B. Johnstone, J. MacRae, J. MacPherson, J. Toal, J. Nicolson, R. Henderson, T. MacKee, K. Cameron, J. Smillie, A. Harrower, J. MacLean, A. Duncan H. MacLennan

Lochfyneside

R. MacLeod, D. McCartney, T. Palmer, A. Palmer, A. MacCallum, D. Callendar, A. Hendry, D. MacPherson, J. Campbell, D. MacDonald, R. Anderson, N. MacDonald, D. MacLeod, T. Aitcheson

Beauly

R. MacIntyre, J. Ross, A. Fraser, V. MacLeod, D. Mackenzie, T. Mackay, N. Reid, K. Mackenzie, J. Marshall, R. MacLennan, N. MacLaren, D. Ross, B. Zblewski

Winners: Lochaber
Runners Up: Dingwall Academy

MacBean and Murchison Cups (Senior Secondary)

Inverness High School

G. Mackenzie, J. Urquhart, A. Anderson, S. Steel, A. Mackinnon, R. Reed, Duncan Fraser, Donald Fraser, C. Stewart, R. Smith, R. Ross, G. Fraser, D. Brown, I. Macdonald, J. Macpherson

Dunoon Grammar School

R. Black, A. Campbell, R. Irvine, C. McColl, Andrew MacDonald, D. Fraser, A. MacRaid, P. Turner, W. Luke, G. Hendry, G. MacNeill, K. Finlayson, A. MacLeod

Lochaber High School

G. MacKay, I. Sutherland, K. Gillespie, D. Cameron, J. MacMillan, D. Park, I. Brown, J. Cranston, J. Toal, S. Slater, H. MacMaster, J. MacRae, K. Kennedy, J. MacMillan, R. Henderson

Inverness Royal Academy

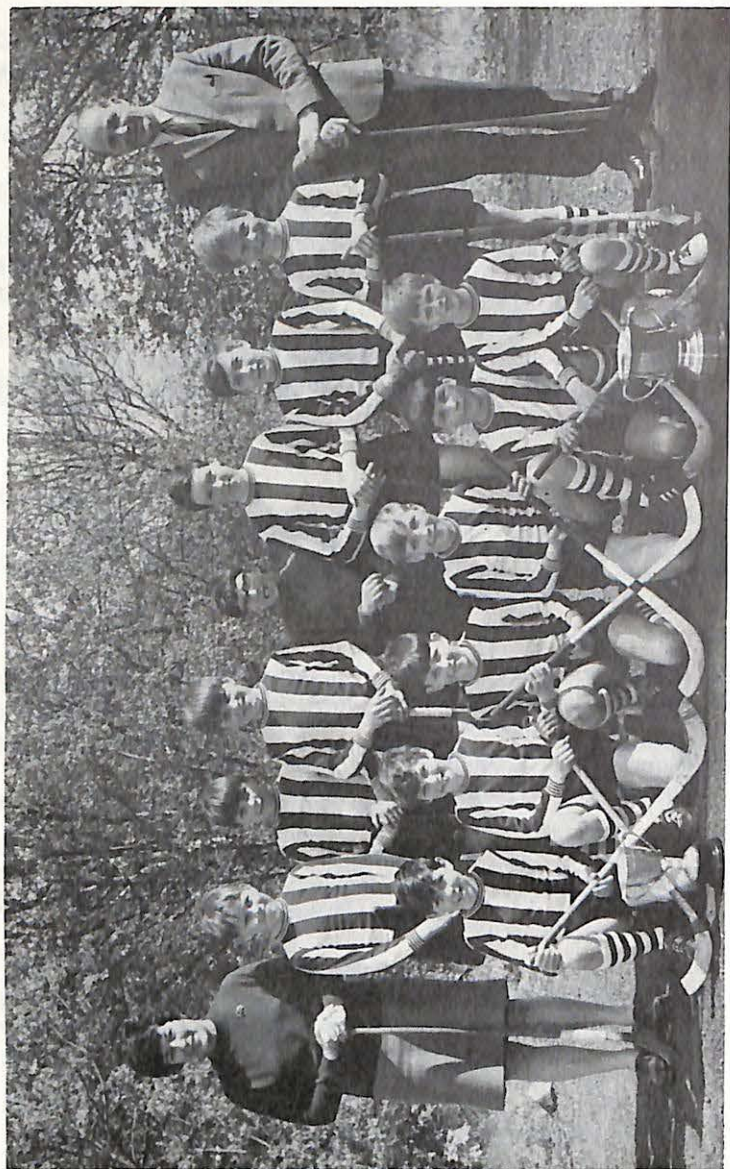
B. MacGregor, B. McIlwraith, N. Ross, J. Grant, A. Cameron, A. Macpherson, N. Beaton, D. McKnight, I. Mackenzie, K. Thomson, G. Girvan, J. Barr, S. McInnes, S. Lawson, J. Mackay

Lochfyneside

J. MacDonald, D. McCartney, A. Hendry, A. Palmer, A. Catto, D. Callander, I. Turnbull, D. MacPherson, R. MacLeod, M. Sinclair, T. Palmer, D. Fraser

MacBean Cup Winners: Lochaber
Runners Up: Plockton

Murchison Cup Winners: Lochaber
Runners Up: Inverness High School/Inverness Academy Select



The Cruachanside under 12 team and 'management' – the proud 1970-71 kingpins of Scottish Primary Schools Shinty.
 Back: Mrs. Campbell, C. Mitchell, H. Matheson, K. Matheson, A. Wylie, A. Donald, I. Livingstone, J. Smith, Mr. K. Campbell
 Front: J. MacDougall, N. MacRae, C. Girvan, W. Stark (capt.), E. Brown, G. Smith

THE RISE OF CRUACHANSIDE

by

KENNETH CAMPBELL

Cruachan Beann dominates the two villages of Dalmally and Taynuilt in Argyll, so that when the two primary schools were united for Shinty, what more appropriate name for the combine could one think of, than Cruachanside.

There was no Shinty played at Taynuilt School since the war and only a little at Dalmally and certainly none in the 1960s. I began coaching boys of 11 to 14 years at Taynuilt in 1961, but as I was unable to have regular training sessions, attendances fluctuated. This effort gave me the satisfaction of seeing several players, started and coached by me, making the Senior and Junior Grades in south teams, notably the MacFarlane brothers, John and Donald, now playing for Mid Argyll. However I felt it would be better to begin coaching at a younger age. Thus, when my wife started teaching at Dalmally School, I decided this was my chance. There was no Shinty played at Dalmally School for years before this and most of the children were incomers to the area.

I suggested to my wife that she should start Shinty in the School and I would bring the younger boys from Taynuilt to Dalmally on Saturdays. Being a keen Shinty fan and a rabid Kyles supporter, it was not a difficult task to get her to take the first steps. I distinctly remember the morning in our kitchen when I got two camans and a ball and proceeded to demonstrate the block. I placed the ball on the floor a couple of feet from my ankles and told her to swing at the ball. "With all my strength", she asked, "Yes" I said, "and with all your weight." She let fly a vicious swing with a new MacPherson stick and I was rather lackadaisical with my block, with the result that I was crippled for a month!! Thus the coaching started and every Friday afternoon saw her on the Mart field at Dalmally, except in the most extreme weather conditions and every boy had to show keenness or go straight back to his sums. Every one had to block, cleck and make every effort to avoid being one sided and pity anyone seen moving the ball to a favoured hand! If he could not hit the ball at first with a weak side, he could at least scoop. This made many of the boys, masters of this most disconcerting of shots, the scoop. Briefly this is how Cruachanside started.

The gate from a very amusing game between the boys and their mothers started our funds and this has been added to by donations, sales of work, concerts etc.

By the Autumn of 1968 it was decided to make a start in competitive shinty. Cruachanside's first game ever in November 1968 was against

Ballachullish School at Dalmally. This was a close match with much good shinty and ended in a win for the home team by 3 goals to 1. In the next round the boys were drawn away against Rockfield School, Oban, with their limitless resources player wise, and who had won the cup in the two previous years. Cruachanside with six of the boys only 9 years old were overran — the final score was 14 - 1. The boys now knew what had to be aimed at. The coaching and practices were continued regularly and many of the boys were showing distinct promise.

The following year we were drawn at home against Rockfield in the MacKay cup and though we lost 5 - 3, the match was even closer than the score, and bearing in mind the previous year's result this was a moral victory for Cruachanside. As all but three of the team would be available the following year, training and practices were intensified. Team work was stressed with emphasis on passing the ball accurately at speed to a better placed team mate. Several friendly games were played in the summer of 1970 against Ballachullish and Tighnabruaich schools.

In May 1970 the boys won the Under 12 six a side medals at the South Lorn Festival of Sport for the first time. In September 1970 the boys won the George Cup at Ballachullish — also for the first time. This is a six a side competition for Under 12s run by the Ballachullish Club and open to teams from Lochaber and Lorne. This was a good omen and the team showed great fighting spirit in beating Rockfield in the Semi-Final after being 2 - 0 down at half time. Thus on to the MacKay Cup and our Annus Mirabilis.

We were drawn against Rockfield again in the first round (home and away) and the first game was at Dalmally. Though Cruachanside pressed hard throughout the game, the boys could not relax to play as we knew they could and the game ended in a 2 - 2 draw.

The Manager then resorted to psychology and arranged a friendly game with Rockfield at Dalmally. Cruachanside won 8 - 0 and the following week in the MacKay cup at Oban they won 7 - 2.

Morale was now high and in the next round Lochfyneside were easily disposed of. This took us through to the Semi Final against Banavie School, who had beaten our good friends Ballachullish School after two very close games. The Semi Final was played at Jubilee Park, Ballachullish on a terrible day of freezing wind and rain. Cruachanside won 8 - 0. This victory put Cruachanside and the villages of Taynuilt and Dalmally on the Shinty map in a big way, but many who had never seen the boys play and whose knowledge of the game was limited gave them little chance against such renowned opposition as Newtonmore in the final. Preparation for the Final was the same as for the other games in an effort to eliminate, as far as possible, cup final nerves.

The venue for the Final was Spean Bridge and the date the 1st May. By 2.30 p.m. the largest crowd ever to witness a MacKay cup Final were at the field.

Newtonmore won the toss and took advantage of the wind that was blowing down the field. Both teams got into their stride quickly and an even match with excellent Shinty was witnessed. At this stage our defence was playing particularly well and kept the eager Newtonmore forwards at bay. Our Captain and half forward, Wilson Stark, was outstanding and after twenty five minutes scored a great hail with a fine drive from fully twenty yards, and this was all the scoring in the first half.

In the second half Newtonmore made positional changes but failed to score. Cruachanside scored three more goals, through George Smith (2) and Hamish Mathieson, to make the final score 4 - 0.

In May of this year the boys again won the under 12 Medals at Oban, and in June we took them to Skye to play Portree Primary boys. This eagerly anticipated trip lived up to all their expectations and brought to a close a most exciting year for Cruachanside.

Footnote. Kenneth Campbell is a Ministry Veterinary Officer in Argyll. He is a native of Scalpay, Harris, and is a stalwart sustainer of Celtic traditions. He learned his shinty at Portree School and won his Blue at Edinburgh University.

'SHINTY' IN LONDON

The following is an extract from a letter received by the Editor in July 1971 from Donald H. Barker, Esq., Deputy Headmaster, Horsenden Secondary Boys' School, Greenford, Middlesex. Australian Bob Cason, a current playing member of the Aberdeen Camanachd Club actually played the game which Mr. Barker describes when he was attached to the School.

'Staff and boys here have played a game called 'shinty' for over 20 years. I hasten to add that I do not think the game we play has its roots in the 'genuine Scottish game of shinty'. The name of the game we play stems from the fact that School Sports Suppliers in the London area sell an ash stick shaped rather like a hockey stick but is narrower and the ball is played on both sides as in ice hockey. These sticks are sold as shinty sticks but they are certainly not as wide as hurling sticks. The ball is a hard composition ball about the size of that used in field hockey but with a much lower bounce as we use it in a playground.

We usually have teams of seven-a-side (with substitutes if necessary) and play on a rectangular pitch with low side boards and portable goal posts at each end similar in size to ice hockey goals. The ball has to be played by the stick and not propelled in any other way except by the goalkeeper who may put it into play by rolling it along the ground. Dangerous play, such as tripping or striking at an opponent, is penalised and the game is decided on goals scored in two periods of 20 minutes.

We have had a lot of fun over the years playing the game usually on Fridays at lunch time and all the younger members of staff and visitors from overseas have traditionally been press ganged into taking part.'

A JAUNDICED VIEW

by

MARY MacLEAN

When people say "Oh, your husband plays Shinty, isn't that some kind of game?", I give a wry smile. To describe the addiction, which is Shinty, as a game seems to do it an injustice. Anything that can inspire such devotion and dedication must surely rank as a religion.

Shinty comes before everything. Frantic phone calls are made all week. The United Nations, waiting for news of the latest aggression in Timbuctoo, can hardly be in such a state of tension as a Shinty Selection Committee awaiting big Lachie's arrival from Outer Mongolia. The fact that they have had to charter a jumbo jet to fetch him and that the silver collection will realise seventy-five pence seems to have eluded them. As the old Highland Shinty Player said "What care I for expense if my full forward be with me".

As a shinty wife I find it causes great problems. No engagement, however pressing or attractive, can hope to compete. In my day dreams I see an invitation to lunch at the Palace having to be refused with regret owing "to a very important prior engagement" viz. the second round of the Sutherland Cup.

Shinty is the greatest deflator of the female ego I have ever known. In the company of shinty enthusiasts the woman has no place or status apart from her role as a vocal supporter. The charms of the most alluring "femme fatale" are completely overlooked while the delights and virtues of the mid-field play are retold, enjoyed and relived ad infinitum.

With all that off my chest I can now see the virtues of this manly outdoor sport. I am ready to admit that we womenfolk would have to watch the calories less carefully if we were to engage in this athletic pursuit. So, how about it, ladies! Can I have some volunteers for the first ever Ladies Shinty Team?

SHINTY IN THE SEVENTIES

by

IAN MacINNES

The wind of change, prevalent in practically every sphere of the world, is at last proving effective in the realms of shinty. This wind has by no means reached gale force, but at least a mild breeze is gently blowing away the cobwebs of generations. It would appear that even the most reactionary elements within the parent body, "The Camanachd Association", have now reluctantly resigned themselves to the inevitable, the stagnation of decades is finally ended, and the first steps have been taken towards what we must all hope is a complete reorganisation of the game. Our own house must be set in order, as a first priority, and eventually, remembering that this is the era of the specialist, the expertise of outside bodies must play a prominent part in the future of shinty. Despite any obstacles, we must harness the co-operation and goodwill of such powerful organisations as the Scottish Tourist Board, An Comunn Gailhealach, and the Highlands and Islands Development Board.

This must be our objective in the near future, but only after we have accomplished the initial tasks to present a new image of the game, which will be projected with such force, as to renew the dwindling interest which is so sadly apparent at all levels.

The present farce of electing by ballot, twenty Vice Presidents every year, should cease immediately, as they serve no useful purpose. Instead, it has been suggested that officials, apart from Chief, Vice Chief, Secretary and Treasurer, should be President, Senior Vice President and Junior Vice President, all elected to serve a term of three years in that capacity, meaning that only a Junior Vice President would require election when the term of office expired.

An Executive Committee should be elected on perhaps similar lines as at present, but that each member be delegated a specific task, to include such duties as Administration, Finance, Publicity, Referees, with each member presenting a report at each Executive meeting.

The present practice of holding the Annual General Meeting on the morning of the Camanachd Cup Final should be superseded by calling an annual conference, devoting at least one whole day to the affairs of the game. This would create a late twentieth century attitude, within the framework of what must be, of necessity, a revised constitution of the present rules.

It is pleasant to record that youth, in however small a way, is now being encouraged to play a part in the administration, and it is a fervent prayer, that greater encouragement will be forthcoming, to allow capable, efficient and enthusiastic young men to gain positions on the Executive Committee.

It may seem a reversal of the normal process, but great changes must start at the top, within the parent body, affecting all aspects of shinty including Senior, Junior, Juvenile and last, but by no means least, Schools Shinty. The last mentioned is, undoubtedly, the most important of all, with coaching plans being put into immediate operation. On the playing field itself, it is generally agreed, even by the stars of the last decade, that great progress has been made in all the arts and crafts of shinty, the game is much faster, more skilful, and a high degree of teamwork has been achieved, a tribute to modern training methods, and a dedication towards the game, completely unknown in what has so often been described as 'the good old days'. Truly the brawn of yesterday has given way to the brain of today.

Footnote. Ian MacInnes, a native of Ballachulish, is Treasurer of the flourishing Glasgow Mid Argyll Club. He started his playing career with his home club and latterly played for Mid Argyll. A fluent Gaelic speaker, he works hard to uphold Celtic culture and traditions.

SHINTY IN YORKSHIRE

The following letter was published in a recent issue of the Inverness Courier.

3 Springwell Lane, Northallerton, Yorkshire, England.

Sir,

I am trying to form a shinty team here in the north of England. I feel sure that some of your readers must have friends or relatives who used to play shinty and might like to take the sport up again, living in Yorkshire or the north-east of England. I wonder if I might appeal, through your columns, for any readers who know of any such exiles to let me have their names and addresses or ask them to contact me.

Thank you.

Yours etc.

Richard Tulloch

THE WAY AHEAD

by

IAIN CAMERON

How to raise Shinty from the level of third class sport to first class is the problem which has defeated shinty legislators for years.

While most other sports have been developed to the level of international competition, Shinty, which has been played in an organised form for almost eighty years, is still little known outside the Highlands.

The game has been in a state of stagnation for years, largely through the failure of the governing body to fulfil its aims to foster and develop shinty. Indeed, we are still not agreed on such fundamental aspects as the type of organisation required, how to distinguish between senior and junior players and how to encourage boys to play the game.

I believe the Camanachd Association has failed to carry out its duties because it is not organised as a governing body should be organised. The Council meets twice a year and the Executive Committee only slightly more often. These meetings are primarily concerned with organising the Camanachd and Sutherland Cup competitions, and therefore little or no time is devoted to considering the future of the game.

The planning and decision making machinery is therefore hopelessly inadequate, so the burden of responsibility falls on the shoulders of the secretary and other officials. We have been fortunate in our choice of secretaries over the years. There now exists a situation where the two main regional bodies carry more authority than the parent association.

It is true to say, however, that the Camanachd Association is only as strong as the clubs from which it is composed, and their parochial attitude together with the Highlanders' traditional reluctance to accept change have been major obstacles to progress. Players and club officials must also bear some of the responsibility for past failure. They have made very little effort to enhance the reputation of the game, either by training or practising the skills which the game demands.

Having briefly described the basic problems as I see them, I will now offer my remedy.

The revival must be planned with three main objectives:—

- (a) To improve the management of the game.
- (b) To attract young people to play the game.
- (c) To attract spectators to the game.

The first priority must be to provide a new management and administrative organisation — one which will have the necessary strength and authority to govern the game. Nothing else should be attempted until this is done.

The framework for the organisation I foresee already exists — where we have the Camanachd Association as the senior body supported by the North and South of Scotland Associations. A combination of these three bodies on a two tier basis would provide a much stronger organisation than we have at present. The present Camanachd Association Council would disappear, as its function could quite easily be taken over by the two regional bodies.

The structure would then look like this:—

1. Camanachd Association Executive Council
(President, 2 Vice Presidents and 10 members)
|
|
|
2. Camanachd Association Regional Councils (North & South)
(President, Vice President and a representative from each club in that area)
|
|
|
3. Clubs — Senior — Junior — Juvenile — Schools

The Executive Council, being the ultimate authority, would be responsible for planning the future development of the game, both short term and long term. They would also supervise the implementation of these plans through the regional councils and clubs. The members would be elected from the regional councils and Schools shinty.

The Regional Councils would be responsible for organising the various competitions and dealing with the day to day affairs of the game.

The administrative work of the whole organisation would be carried out by one full-time secretary and two part-time secretaries. A detailed Constitution for the organisation could be drawn up after consultation with all existing associations. When nominating people for the Executive Council, an effort should be made to encourage individuals with management and financial experience to take an active part in running the game.

The first priority of the new organisation should be to modernise the rules of play and competition rules.

The second objective, which would now be the task of the Executive Council, would be to ensure the future of the game through the development of Schools and Juvenile shinty.

This can only be done by establishing properly trained coaches, working to an approved coaching scheme, in schools and among juvenile clubs.

In order to train coaches, it is necessary to appoint a national coach who would supervise the coaching scheme which would be included in the syllabus of Physical Education Colleges. A similar coaching course for players and ex-players would also be arranged in a suitable centre.

The successful recruitment of young players is governed by the opportunities for their advancement to higher levels. Planned development of junior and senior shinty should therefore go hand-in-hand with the development of schools shinty.

The third objective is to attract more spectators to help finance the game. There is obviously a limit to which this can be done, but it is important that we go about it in the proper way. I believe raising the standard of play is the best way to attract people to watch the game and to retain them.

This is where clubs and players must play their part. They must strive to obtain better playing fields and equipment — essential requirements for a high standard of play. This is obviously a long term plan but clubs should be investigating the possibilities immediately.

Clubs can also raise the standard of play by encouraging players to train and practise. Facilities are available and they should be used to the full. This particularly applies to young players; few realise the need to practise their skills, yet it is through practice and not in matches that these skills should be properly developed.

The provision of good referees has been a problem for years. A training scheme, similar to the one I described for coaches, could be conducted by two or three of our present top referees. This could be followed up by a system of supervision similar to the one adopted in football.

I put these suggestions forward in the knowledge that financial assistance is available provided we are sufficiently well organised to obtain it and make proper use of it. Nothing can be achieved overnight, and nothing can be achieved without sheer hard work on the part of those who have faith in the future of the game. The importance of planning the future cannot be overstressed if we are to make any headway. This gives us the advantage of knowing what we are trying to do, and mistakes can be spotted and rectified much more easily.

It is not possible for me to enlarge on my ideas in this article. I don't expect everyone to agree with them, but if they succeed in stimulating some thought I will be well satisfied.

Footnote. Iain Cameron is Secretary of the Glasgow Mid Argyll club, an executive member of the South of Scotland Shinty Association and a Director of the Celtic Society. He has played for the Glasgow club for the last fourteen years after leaving his native Ballachulish. He is a Maintenance Foreman with British Railways.

THE OLD GAME

by

ANGUS MACINTYRE

The shinty game is failing
Throughout the Northern Land
Whilst we stand here, bewailing,
And raise no helping hand.

Let Gaels all stand together,
As steadfast as the Bens,
To see that stick on leather
Keeps echoing in our glens.

At the dying peats I'm sitting,
And back from days of yore
Come sounds of crisp, clean hitting,
The cheers, the clever score.

The jousting and the swinging,
The subtle, silken slip
From men, whose way of winning
Despised the hack and trip.

An' the great names I am minding
Flood back from yester year;
The list's too long, I'm finding,
To put them all down here.

From Oban up to Spean,
From Newtonmore to Kyles,
Came stalwarts, all worth seein'
Well skilled in shinty's wiles.

Strong men from far Lochaber,
All upright, broad and tall;
With strength to toss a caber,
Or hit a pitch-length ball.

Fleet-footed men from Furnace,
And Inveraray Town,
Went North to Ballachulish
To throw the gauntlet down.

A challenge that was taken,
In battles fierce to see,
When valiant hearts were shaken
On the famous "Jubilee". *

Kingussie, cute an' cunning,
Clever, sharp an' slick
Were always in the running,
Old Maestros of the stick.

And cheering on the players,
The Bodachs let it rip,
Wi' words no' found in prayers —
— An' "snifters" at their hip.

It wass not there for boozin',
For that was neffer done;
TO COMFORT YOU WHEN LOSIN'
AND CHEER YOU WHEN YOU WON.

Tho' you seldom had the notion,
You sometimes made so bold,
As to swig an extra potion,
IN CASE YOU GOT THE COLD.

No man of rightful thinking
Would overdo "THE STUFF"
For he might get keen on drinking,
AN' WAN BOTTLE WASS ENOUGH.

No yelling an' no shouting,
No beer-cans on the sward;
Nor "Polis" busy clouting,
— For that we thank the Lord.

Just skill an' manly striving
In shinty's ancient arts,
That kept the old game thriving,
And gladdened Highland hearts.

All storms the Game will weather,
Both strong an' proud will stand,
If brave we fight together
Throughout this Bonnie Land.

To keep our shinty living,
With hand an' heart engage;
START WORKING AND START GIVING
TO SAVE OUR HERITAGE!

* Jubilee Park at Ballachulish

NEWTONMORE – CAMANACHD CUP WINNERS 1971



Back Row: D. Ritchie, D. Cheyne, D. MacGregor, R. Kirk, J. Fraser,
J. Mackenzie, I. Bain, G. Sellar
Front Row: B. Stewart, S. Ralph, H. Chisholm (Captain), J. Campbell, K. Smith

