

# TIPPERARY ATHLETES



Paddy Butler (188), third from right

## Paddy Butler

by Michael O'Dwyer

Paddy Butler was born on 10 April 1895 at Ballyknockane, Templetuohy, County Tipperary. He was the fourth son of Patrick Butler, a farmer, and Margaret Butler (née Toole). The eight children in the family were Mary, John, Anastatia, Michael, Richard, Margaret, Paddy and Elizabeth. The third son, Richard Butler (1890–1973), was a member of the Garda Síochána and was a sergeant in Dublin at Store Street station. Paddy Butler was a well-known and popular long distance runner, hurler and Gaelic footballer. On 6 March 1926 at the Irish senior cross-country championships held at Phoenix Park racecourse over a nine mile course Paddy Butler finished in fourteenth place. Tipperary won the inter-county championship with forty-nine points, with Dublin second on sixty-one points, and Antrim third with seventy-one points. Ulsterville Harriers won the inter-club championship. The scoring members for Tipperary were J. J. Ryan, Redmond Moore, Tommy Keating, Richard O'Brien, Paddy Butler and W. O'Sullivan. This was the first time Tipperary won the Irish senior inter-county cross-country championship and remains the county's only inter-county win at national senior level outside the 1945–1955 golden period of cross-country running in Tipperary. The individual winner at Phoenix Park racecourse was J. J. Ryan of Tipperary Athletic Club winning the title for the fourth year in succession. His win in a time of 53:43 was witnessed by what was described as one of the largest crowds ever seen at a cross-country meeting. Paddy Butler of Templemore Athletic Club finished in a time of 56:02. There is an interesting reference to Paddy Butler in the parish history book of Moyne-Templetuohy: 'In Junior hurling Templetuohy defeated Castleiney, Clonmore and Drom to earn a place in the Mid final against Thurles Kickhams. The final was fixed for Moyne on Sunday 14th November but Templetuohy failed to field a team as four of their best players were injured the previous Sunday when they played Drom in the semi-final...In the re-scheduled final on Sunday March 24th 1935, at Moyne, the local team lost by 5-1 to 4-3. In this game Paddy (Boggins) Butler marked a son of Jack Mooney, a player he had played against in 1910. The *Tipperary Star* reporter wondered, "if Ballyknockane is not The Tír-na-nÓg of Tipperary." It was considered "the best junior final seen for thirty years".' Paddy Butler died on 5 December 1977 at St Vincent's Hospital, Mountmellick, aged eighty-two, and is interred in Templeree cemetery, near Castleiney.