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IRISH PRIDE STIRS HURLING - PADDY HOMAN & Boys of Fairhill-

**When I read Dan Barry's superb ["Irish Pride Stirs Hurling, A Sport All Its Own"](#) (Sunday sports, August 30) the familiar strains of Cork's anthem instantly flooded my head: Come boys and spend a day / with our Hurling Club so gay / The clash of the ash it will make your heart thrill..../ Well, Christy Ring he hooked the ball
We hooked him up, balls and all / Here's up them all / says the boys of Fairhill.**

It's the [Boys of Fairhill](#), best heard in the lyric cadences of native singer [Paddy Homan](#), proclaiming pride in the greatest hurler in the history of the game, Christy Ring of Cork.

But Barry omits an important part of the Irish pride in this most ancient of all sports. The revival of hurling came not just with the bursts of "Come on, lads!" erupting from the sidelines, but from the ladies of Chraobh an Chéitinnigh who formed the first women's hurling club in 1904. It is now called camogie. Irish women were very much to the fore in this revival. Lady Gregory, Maud Gonne and Countess Markievicz all left their mark on the Irish consciousness and in the revival of Gaelic sports.

The early morning devotees who fill the pubs in Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, San Francisco and Washington, DC to watch live matches beamed from Croke Park attests that it is still the clash of the ash which produces no "sweeter music than that of the hurling field".

-Robert Lyons, Kennebunkport

-Letter on-line