AWARDS FOR SPORTS STARS

IT WAS the biggest social event of the Sligo sporting world on Monday night last when Sligo's outstanding Sports Stars, 1969, were presented with their awards by the Mayor of Sligo, Ald. Sean McManus, in a packed Gaiety Cinema, following an informal reception in the Hotel Silver Swan, attended by the award winners and a host of other Sligo sports personalities.

The highly successful event was organised and sponsored by the Summerhill College Junior P.P.U., and awards were donated by Sligo business people. The winners were selected by a panel of Sligo sports journalists while a special "Hall of Fame" winner was selected by Dublin sports writers.

At the reception, before the presentation ceremony, the winners were introduced to their respective sponsors.

Award winners

Sligo's Top Ten Sports Stars, 1969, are:

CLAIRE WALSH (Athletics): Her most outstanding achievement of the year was victory in the 100 m., 200 m., and 400 m. in the All-Ireland Championships held in Santry Stadium in July.

MICHAEL FLEMING (Badminton): Selected by Sligo's sports writers for his outstanding contribution to badminton in the area through the years. He was on the Sligo team which won the All-Ireland Championship by defeating Wexford in Dublin in April.

JOHN McGOWAN (Basketball): Despite a series of injuries early in the season, he recovered completely and was selected as reserve on the Irish International Senior Basketball team. Last week he was star performer in the inter-provincial series.

LIAM CAFFREY (Gaelic Football): Long overshadowed by Mickey Kearins, Liam Caffrey has given outstanding service to the County Sligo team. His selection on successive Connaught teams, together with his brilliant performance against Kildare in the National League semi-final, earned him the award.

MICK BURKE (Hurling): Dedicated to the promotion of hurling in the county, his work behind the scenes is contributing greatly to a revival of interest in hurling in Sligo. He was selected on the Connaught hurling team last year and performed well in the Railway Cup.

GEORGE DRAPER (Rugby): Selected last year to captain the Connaught team for an inter-provincial game against Ulster in Belfast.

KEN TURNER (Soccer): Appointed player-coach of Sligo Rovers, he has succeeded in shaping a bright future for Sligo in the F.A.I. Cup and has improved considerably their fortunes in the League of Ireland.

MARTIN O'HARA (Cycling): One of Sligo's most promising young cyclists, he won three prizes in last year's Ras Tailtean and then went on to take three prizes in the Ras Connachta.

PATSY LANG (Swimming): She was a member of the Ursuline Convent team which won the All-Ireland Life-saving Championship in Dublin last October for the third year in succession.

DONAL NEARY (Wrestling): Last year he became the first Sligoman ever to win an Irish Senior Wrestling title by taking the bantam-

1917, he won his first medal with his club, Tubbercurry, when they became county senior champions. A truly great sportsman, he had the distinction of playing on the first-ever Connaught Railway Cup side. He had the unusual experience of playing against his own sons. He was selected by a panel of Dublin journalists — an indication that, in his day, his was a household name in Ireland.

Congratulated

Speaking at the official presentation ceremony in the Gaiety Cinema, the Mayor of Sligo (Ald. Sean McManus) congratulated the Summerhill College Junior P.P.U. on successfully sponsoring and organising the event.

In a tribute to the athletes, he said they were doing a tremendous job for themselves, their teams and their county. Everybody should appreciate the efforts of the winners in their respective sports. The Mayor also complimented the Sligo public for supporting the venture so wholeheartedly.

On behalf of the athletes, Mr. Tom O'Brien expressed sincere thanks to the Summerhill College P.P.U., and to the sponsors of the individual awards.

The awards were donated by business people in Sligo. They were: Athletics—Mr. Harry Brett, Sligo Meat Exporters Ltd.; Badminton—Mr. Kevin Murray, D. M. Hanley Ltd.; Basketball — Mr. Sean Byrne, Silver Slipper Room; Gaelic Football—Mr. J. Maye, Maye Concrete Ltd.; Hurling—Mr. J. J. Higgins, Hotel Silver Swan; Rugby—Mrs. Meldrum, Meldrum's Lt Soccer — Mr. Paraic Fergus Currie's Bakery; Cycling—Mr. M. Martin, O'Connod Bros. Ltd.; Swi ming — Mr. J. Mullaney, Mullar Bros.; Wrestling — Mr. D. Tahe Taheny's Ltd.; Sports Organiser Mr. J. Harte, Cafe Cairo.

The "Hall of Fame" Award w presented by Waterford Glass Ltd

In the picture are (left to rig back row): Donal Neary (Wrestlin Ken Turner (Soccer); Mick Flemi (Badminton); George Draper (Rugb Martin O'Hara (Cycling); Jarla McDonagh, who accepted the hu ing award for Mick Burke; Jo McGowan (Basketball).

Front row, left to right: Li Caffrey (Gaelic Football); Cla Walsh (Athletics); Tom "Clic Brennan (Hall of Fame); Patsy La (Swimming); Tom O'Brien (Spo Organiser).