



Allianz National Football League 2009

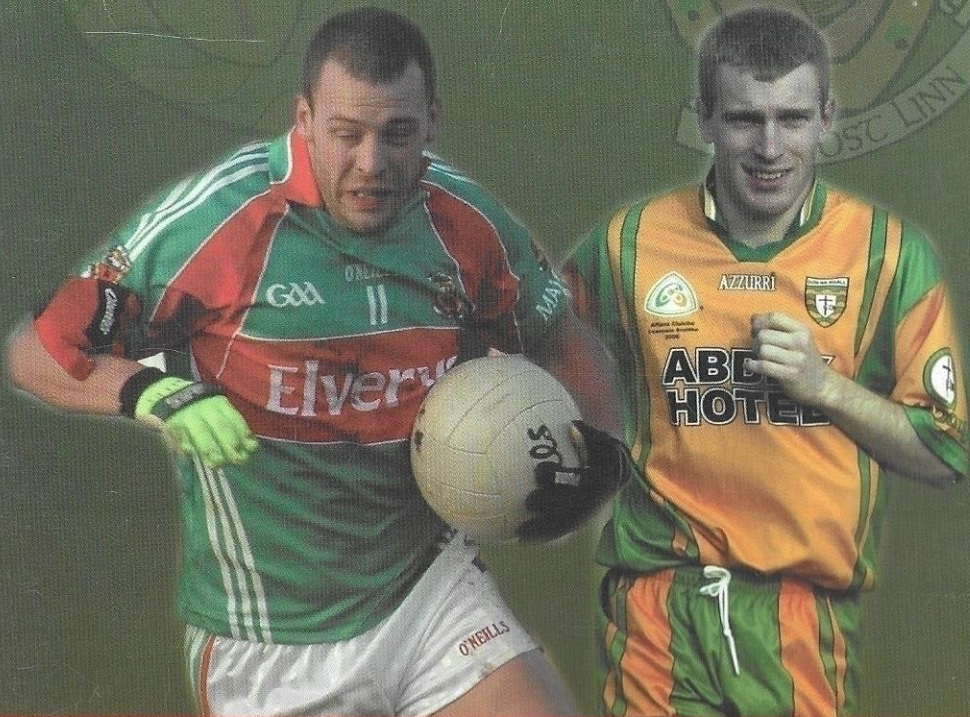


Dún na nGall



Maigh Eo

Saturday 14th February 2009
O'Donnell Park, Letterkenny



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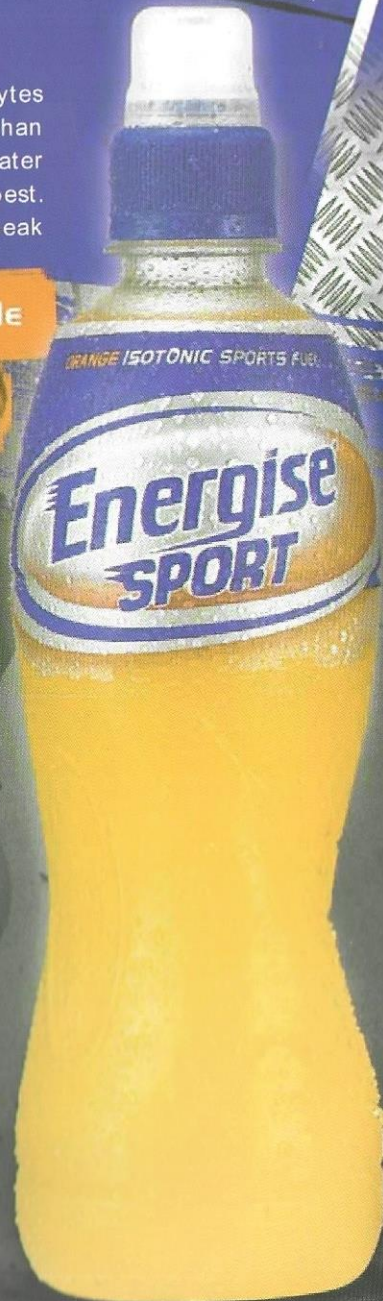
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Source: tns mrbi, Dec '08



Fáilte

Mar Cathaoirleach ar Coiste Chondae Dhún na nGall, is cúis mhór áthais domh failte a chuir romhaibh go leir anseo inniu chuig Páirc Uí Dhomhnaill í gcóir Cluiche Sraith Naisiunta Roinn 1 in eadan Mhaigh Eo.



I welcome you all here today to the Allianz National League game in O'Donnell Park, Letterkenny. I especially welcome John O Mahoney and the Mayo team, management, officials and supporters. Today, we wish John Joe Doherty and the Donegal team and backroom staff well in his first home league game as manager.

I want to thank the St Eunans club, their officers and members for their continued development of O'Donnell Park to even a higher standard than it was for the Kerry game two years ago and indeed the Derry last year. With the installation of their new turnstiles, parking and modern facilities for players and spectators, this is now a top county ground that would match any in Ireland.

I would like to thank our main sponsors the Abbey Hotel and Azzuri, also to Corporate and Club Donegal for their continued support.

Finally, my thanks once again to St Eunans who have organised today's match arrangements meticulously and wish them well in their future development.

Sean Ó Ceallaigh,
Cathaoirleach Bord na Condae

Aisling Ní Bhraoin will be singing the National Anthem before the Donegal/Mayo game. She was a member of the St Eunans Junior Scór ballad group who won last year's county final and she also won the Ulster Scór Final of the Aitheoirseoireacht competition and eventually runner up in the All Ireland final. Aisling is also a member of the St Eunans u14 girls football team.

Buiochas

Naomh Adhamhnain would like to thank the following for their contribution to this match day programme: Fr. Sean Gallagher, Ciaran O'Donnell (Donegal Democrat), Donna McBride and Declan Doherty (Donegal News Photographs), Tom Comack (Donegal People's Press), Peter Campbell (Donegal Democrat) Alan Foley (Donegal Democrat), Sean Feeny (Donegal News) Chris McNulty (Donegal News), Michael Gallagher (Western People, Mayo) Sean Feeney (Mayo County Secretary) Micheal O Giobuin (Naomh Adhamhnain) Alma Kavanagh (runai, Naomh Adhamhnain) and Brian McGeehin (Naomh Adhamhnain). Finally thanks also to Adrienne Randles for putting it all together.
Editor: Paul McGovern



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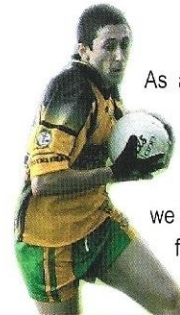
John Joe Doherty

We will certainly be looking for a better result in this game as the game was over really before it got started in Kerry. Our supporters deserve a better display – particularly those who made the long trek to Kerry. We hope to give them that today. Mayo and ourselves are in the same boat, having lost our opening matches and we both have a good record in the National League in recent seasons, so we are expecting a very competitive game in O'Donnell Park.

We have three tough home games, starting with Mayo and every year your first priority is to win your home games and try to nick a few points on your travels to maintain your Div. 1 status and really just build from there in terms of play-offs and building towards the Antrim match on June 14th.



Rory Kavanagh



As a St.Eunan's man I am extremely honoured and pleased to captain Donegal in O'Donnell Park. We are hoping to get the National League campaign back on track today after an indifferent display away to Kerry.

We are aware that we face a tough task against a very good Mayo side and we have every respect for their players and management. However, we must put our best foot forward today and secure a much needed victory. I hope you enjoy the game.

Rory Kavanagh

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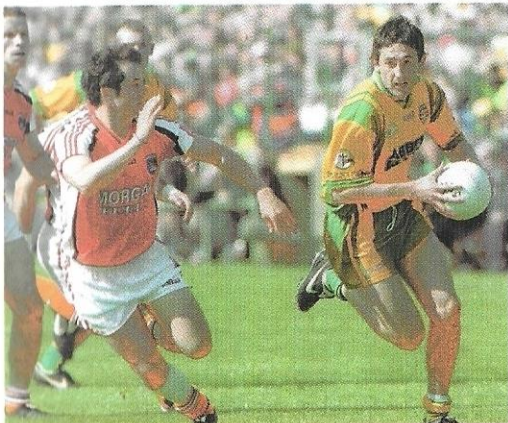
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Scór 1969 – 2009

Micheal O Giobuin

Tá Scór na nÓg agus Scór Sinsir ar an saol anois le 40 bhliain, agus is cinnte go bhfuil sé ar cheann de na comórtais cultúrtha is sine agus is saibhir sa tír. Tugann sé deis do dhaoine óga agus do dhaoine fásta ar fud na tíre ar fad a gcuid scileanna agus tallanna i gcúrsaí ceoil, drámaíocht agus rince a léiriú don domhain mór, agus chomh maith le sin, tugann sé seans díofa a ndíograis don cultúr a roinnt eatarthu féin.

Tá muid iontach bródúil anseo i C.L.G Naomh Adhamhnáin, as ár iomaitheoirí Scór agus an traidisiúin láidir ata gnóthaithe amach againn ag gníomhaíochtaí Scór. Bhunaímid scór na mbunscoileanna sa pharóiste sa bhliain 2007 agus tá sé ag dul ó neart go neart.

In the Official Guide of the Gaelic Athletic Association Rule 4 states as a clear objective the following: "The Association shall actively support the Irish language, traditional Irish dancing, music, song and other aspects of Irish culture."

With the birth of Scór in 1969 the GAA through its clubs has become actively involved in promoting Irish culture in a meaningful and enjoyable manner. Language and culture are amongst the most important elements of Irish heritage. The GAA, through its many clubs throughout the country and through Scór nÓg and Scór Sinsir, has played a significant part in the revival of our culture and heritage in creating an understanding and interest in its importance. Scór competitions commence in each county with clubs competing to represent their county in one of the many different Scór events. County winners go through to the Provincial Finals with the winners at that stage qualifying for the All-Ireland Finals.

Scór is divided in two sections. Scór na nÓg caters for the younger GAA members while Scór Sinsir caters for adults members.

St Eunan's GAA club is very proud of the role we have played in promoting the aims of Scór. Our competitors have established a very strong tradition, bringing home numerous County and Provincial titles over the years. In 2007 we established Scór na mBunscoileanna in the Parish and this has been going from strength to strength.

The national finals of both Scór na nÓg and Scór Sinsir are a wonderful occasion and winning a national title is a tremendous honour for any club.



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All-Ireland Semi-final 1992

By Michael Gallagher

SUNDAY, August 16th 1992 isn't a date that reverberates through history, but the football anoraks among us will easily recall that on that far-off day Mayo and Donegal played an All-Ireland semi-final in Croke Park.

It was seen by many as a game of only moderate importance. Dublin were certainties to win the All-Ireland that year, we were told (aren't they supposed to win it every year) and the western cousins were just going through the motions.

Of course life doesn't always follow pre-destined patterns and a month later when Gary Walsh, Martin McHugh, Matt Gallagher, Manus Boyle, Joyce McMullan and their colleagues walked up the steps of the Hogan Stand the boys in blue were crying on the Hill. In my Mayo home that afternoon we celebrated as if we had won Sam ourselves. Our ancestors had travelled south with the remnants of Hugh O'Donnell's followers' centuries earlier and we always carried with us a special grá for Donegal and it's people. Of course on August 16th 1992 the Mayo Gallaghers had no such feelings for our northern cousins.

We wanted to remove them from the All-Ireland race the way you'd rid yourself of a sciortáin from some sensitive, fleshy area after a day in the bog. We were confident of victory that morning as we settled ourselves into the well-worn seats on the old rickety western train for our eastern sojourn, but then again, aren't we always confident. The carriages were packed with green and red bedecked pilgrims as we clattered across the Shannon and readied ourselves for an adventure in the big smoke. We were relaxed about our opposition. Donegal were like ourselves-success starved in a football sense, forgotten by successive governments from an economic point of view, with thousands of its finest sons and daughters scattered to the four corners of the earth. Mayo and Donegal had more in common than Red Hugh's 17th century refugees.

As match time approached, the pavement scenery outside Quinn's, The Big Tree and Barry's Hotel was decorated in shimmering gold, green and red as powerful men from The Mullet peninsula chatted happily with magical ladies from Bunrana and beyond. The atmosphere was similar to a successful wedding reception, it's just a pity that a football match had to spoil it all. As I said, we were confident of victory. It was three years since we almost won the All-Ireland against Cork and we were ready to have another shot at the title.

Liam McHale was our main man. Gabriel Irwin was between the posts and Peter Forde was a formidable full-back. Tomas Tierney, Sean Maher, TJ Kilgallon and Kevin Staunton made up a formidable central diamond while the enigma that was Pdraig Brogan, waited to be unleashed from the subs bench. We were confident and ready for another final tilt, but Donegal had other ideas. They ground out a four-point win and we slouched out of Croke Park with heavy hearts. Little did we realise that we had just lost to the eventual All-Ireland champions and when Sam visited places like Kilcar and Letterkenny later that year we could only dream about what might have been.

The defeat also ended Brian McDonald's tenure as Mayo manager, but that's a story for another day.

(Michael Gallagher is a sports journalist with The Western People)

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Ceannogai

Fr. Seán

1933

It appears that Dún na nGall and Maigh Eo first met in the All-Ireland Junior Football Championship Home Final in Croke Park on October 8, 1933. Dún na nGall played brilliantly in the first half and led by 2-2 to 1-3 at half-time. Tom Diver and Neil Joe McGee were Dún na nGall's goalscorers with Ownie McFadden and the legendary John O'Donnell 'notching the minors', as they used to say in days of yore. The second half saw a complete transformation and a rampant Maigh Eo side held Dún na nGall scoreless and went on to win 2-15 to 2-2.

Maigh Eo went on to win their first All-Ireland Junior title by beating Londain 3-7 / 2-4 in the final. Their team was: T. Grier (capt.), J. O'Gara, P. O'Loughlin, P.J. Coffey, B. Frazer, P.J. Walsh, M. Raftery, P. Collins, T. Regan, J. Carney, P. Conboy, P. Laffey, H. O'Brien, T. Kelly, T. Culkín.

The Dún na nGall team in Croke Park was:

J. McEnhill (Donegal); J. Lawn (Donegal) Teague Diver (Gaoth Dobhair) J.P. McGinley (Kilcar); J. Gallinagh (Ballyshannon) B. O'Donnell (Dungloe) J. Brown (Carrick); T. Gallagher (Ardara) and N. McGee (Falcarragh); P. McManus (Bundoran) P. Clancy (Bundoran) J. O'Donnell (Dungloe); K. Sweeney (Dungloe) T. McDermott (Ballyshannon) O. McFadden (Gaoth Dobhair). Sub: Tom Diver (Gaoth Dobhair).

1934

Next Wednesday, February 18, sees the 75th Anniversary of the formation of County Donegal Camogie Association. The inaugural meeting was held in the Literary Institute, Letterkenny, (where the Donegal County Library is at present), on Feb. 18 1934. There were representatives from nine clubs present – Cardonagh, Buncrana, Convoy, Letterkenny, Falcarragh, Bundoran, Dunkineely, Donegal and Kilmacrenan. The officers elected were: Chairperson: May O'Donnell, Donegal. Rúnaí Frankie Coyle, Kilmacrenan. Cisteoir: Eileen Kearns, Letterkenny. There followed a couple of years of great Camogie activity in the County.

1935

At the end of November 1935 the Annual General Meeting of the St. Eunan's G.A.A. Club, Letterkenny, was informed that the Burn field had been purchased and was to become Páirc Uí Dhomhnaill, O'Donnell Park.

1936

The official opening of the new Gaelic Park, Bundoran, marked the first appearance (as far as I know) of a Maigh Eo team in Dún na nGall. The Connacht Champions of 1936, Maigh Eo, beat the Leinster finalists of 1934-5, Lú, by 1-6 to 1-1 to capture the Star of the Sea Cup on 30 August 1936. Later on in the year, in a much-praised gesture, Maigh Eo presented the Cup to Coiste Chontae Dhún na nGall for their Minor Football Championship. The Minor Champions received the 'Mayo Cup' until it was replaced by Corn Chuimhneacháin Dhónaill Mhic a' Bhaird.

1937

On May 2, 1937, with great pomp and splendour, Páirc Uí Dhomhnaill, O'Donnell Park, Letterkenny, was officially opened. Aontroim beat Dún na nGall 5-5 / 2-2 in the Hurling match and Ard Mhacha beat Dún na nGall 2-5 / 1-7 in the football match.

1939

The Senior Footballers of Dún na nGall and Maigh Eo met for the first time at the Official Opening of the Pearse Memorial Park, Ardara, on June 11, 1939. Maigh Eo won the Pearse Memorial Cup by beating Dún na nGall 3-8/1-4. Maigh Eo fielded seven of the Sam Maguire Cup-winning team of 1936 and five other first-fifteen regulars.

The Maigh Eo team was: T. Burke; J. O'Shaughnessy, P. Quinn, Purty Kelly; T. O'Regan, J. Poppenwell, M. Griffin; A. O'Toole, J. Munnely; J. Carney (0-1), P. Judge (1-0), B. Mongey (0-1), G. Gorrell, P. Moclair (1-3), T. Hoban (1-3).

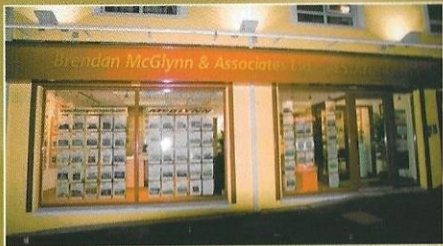
Dún na nGall: H. McGuinness; J. Devlin, T. Gallagher, E. Cannon; J. McGarvey, P. Gill, A. Bradley; P. McGill V. McHugh (0-1), A. O'Gorman, H. Gallagher (1-2), C. McDyer; D. Callaghan, J. Bradley, D. Gillespie. Sub: Jackie Gallagher (0-1).

1940

On November 24, 1940, Dún na nGall and Maigh Eo met in a Senior competitive game for the first time. Maigh Eo beat Dún na nGall 1-10 / 0-5 in the National Football League in Ballina. The 'Derry Journal' report was:

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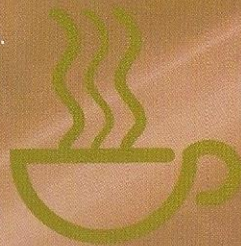
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It was a well-contested game. Donegal had a better share of the exchanges than the score would suggest.

Mayo opened with a point from a free by Ormsby, who repeated this performance shortly afterwards. Munnelly added a further point, and the Mayo defence, in which Winters was outstanding, repulsed a few Donegal raids. Mayo returned to secure another point per Laffey, and Kearney added two further points for Mayo. Then Laffey obtained a goal, and Judge a point. Donegal forwards missed several scoring chances before McGarvey had a point from a free just before the interval. Half-time score – Mayo, 1-8; Donegal, 0-1.

After the resumption Donegal broke away. Their forwards again missed several scoring opportunities. Despite the fact that Donegal had the balance of exchanges so far in this half, Mayo were the first to score. They went ahead with a point per Munnelly. Assuming the offensive, Donegal got two points per H. Gallagher, and a further point per McGarvey. Munnelly added another point for Mayo, but just before the whistle O'Neill had a point for Donegal.

The Donegal team comprised the following: - P. McNelis, J. Cassidy, J. Gallagher (Gweedore), H. O'Donnell, A. McBrearty, M. Melly, H. McGovern, C. McDwyer, J. McGarvey, J. O'Neill, H. Gallagher, J. Gallagher (Ballyshannon), M. Slevin, P. Gill, V. McHugh

The full list of past National League clashes is:

1. 24 Nov 1940	Maigh Eo 1-10	Dún na nGall 0-5	Ballina
2. 11 Nov 1984	Dún na nGall 1-13	Maigh Eo 1-5	Ballyshannon
3. 27 Oct 1985	Dún na nGall 0-14	Maigh Eo 1-11	Ballyshannon
4. 6 Feb 1994	Dún na nGall 3-7	Maigh Eo 0-12	Ballybofey
5. 13 Feb 2005	Maigh Eo 2-10	Dún na nGall 1-11	Ballina
6. 12 Feb 2007	Dún na nGall 1-13	Maigh Eo 1-10	Ballybofey
7. 22 Apr 2007	Dún na nGall 0-13	Maigh Eo 0-10	Croke Park
8. 17 Feb 2008	Dún na nGall 2-11	Maigh Eo 0-16	Castlebar

Dún na nGall won 5 Maigh Eo won 2 One draw John Joe Doherty played in the 1994 match.

1946

The great Paddy Prendergast played for Dún na nGall in the Dr. McKenna Cup, Ulster Senior Football Championship and National Football League (Dr. Lagan Cup).

1954

On June 6 1954 the Dún na nGall –Maigh Eo bond was cemented by Maigh Eo playing at the official opening of Tírconaill Park, Donegal Town. On that day Dún na nGall beat Liatroim 2-6 / 1-6 and Maigh Eo fell heavily to An Cabhán 5-8 / 3-2. At the reception in the Technical School (no Abbey then!!) 'Mr. Paddy Prendergast, speaking on behalf of Mayo, said it was a very pleasant duty for him to thank all concerned. He had looked forward to the opening very much as it had a great significance for him, having played for Donegal before he played for Mayo. The park was in the most beautiful surroundings and in looking for alibis as to their defeat when they went home they could say that they were so engrossed by the lovely scenery that they got beaten.'

On that day in Donegal Town Maigh Eo fielded nine of the team that had just won the National League – S. Wynne, J. Forde, P. Prendergast, S. Flanagan, F. Fleming, J. Nallen, P. Irwin, S. O'Donnell, and M. Flanagan.

1971

Martin Carney makes the first of his 76 appearances for Dún na nGall (in the Championship against An Dún).

1991

Pádraig Brogan comes on as a substitute in each of Dún na nGall's three Championship matches.

1992

Dún na nGall beat Maigh Eo in the All-Ireland Senior Football Championship semi-final by 0-13 to 0-9. It remains their one and only Championship meeting.

2007

Dún na nGall beat Maigh Eo by 0-13 to 0-10 in the National Football League Final.



Donegal *Dún na nGall*

Manager: John Joe Doherty

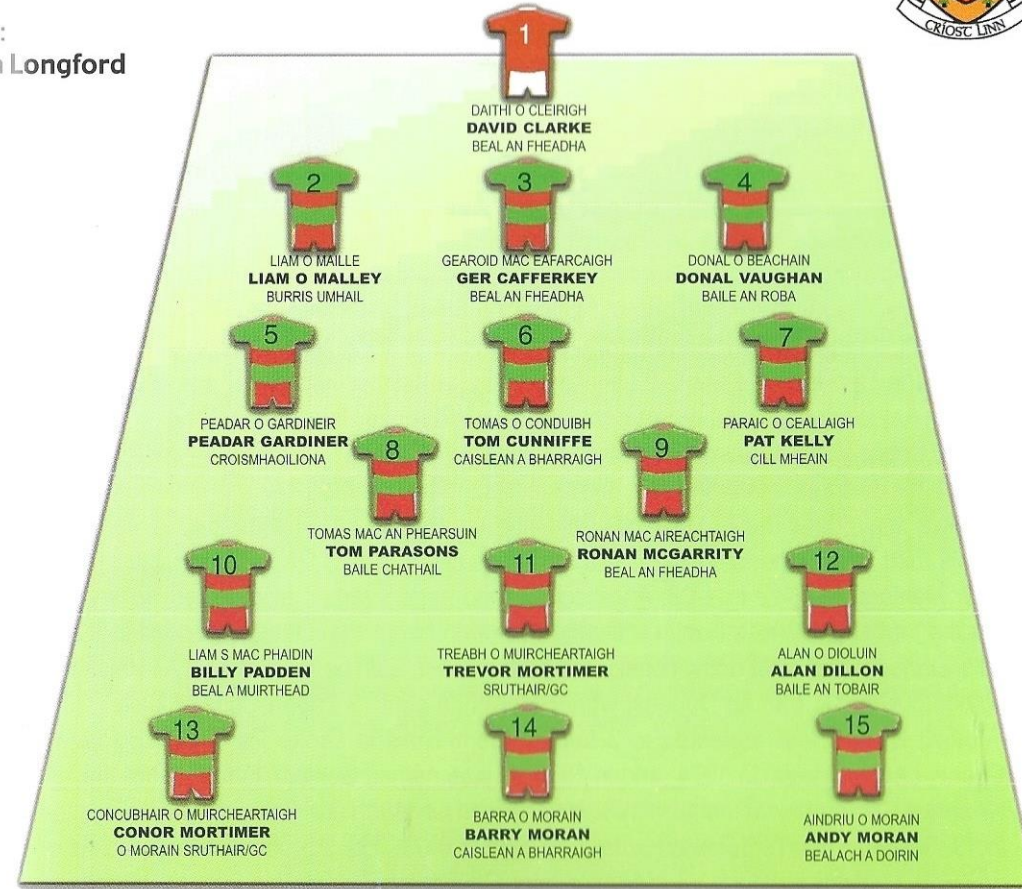


Referee:
John Bannon from Longford

Fir Ionaid: 16 Pol Ó Durcain Paul Durcan Na Ceithre Máistrí, 17 Brian O Roipear Brian Roper Aodh Ruadh (B/S), 18 Brendán Ó Baoill Brendan Boyle Ard 'A Ratha, 19 Eoin Mac Uaid Eoin Wade Naomh Conaill, 20 Reamonn Mac Súilbhe Raymond Sweeney An Clochan Liath.

Mayo *Maigh Eo*

Manager: Sean O Mathuna

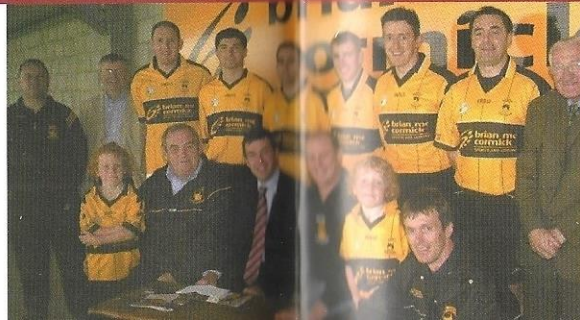


Fir Ionaid: 16 ROIBEARD O O h-IONGHAILE BREAQBHUIGH, ROBERT HENNELLY, 17 CAOIMHIN MAC MAC LOCHLAINN CNOC MOR KEVIN MCLOUGHLIN, 18 COLM O BAOIL DAIBHEIDI COLM O BOYLE, 19 CIARAN O CONRAI SRUTHAIR/GC KIERAN CONROY, 20 PARAIC O h-AIRT BEAL AN FHEADHA PAT HARTE, 21 BARRA O CEALLAIGH BEALACH A DOIRIN BARRY KELLY, 22MICHEAL O SUIBHIN CILL TSEADHNA MICKEY SWEENEY, 23 MARC MAC RAGHNAILL SRUTHAIR/GC MARK RONALDSON 24 MICHEAL O MULLAIN CLAR CHLAINNE MHUIRIS MICKEY MULLINS.

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St. Eunan's Hall of Fame 2008 'James Gallagher'

By Paul McGovern & Brian McGeehin

At the St. Eunan's Annual Dinner Dance, held recently in the Mt. Errigal Hotel, "The Great" James Gallagher became the 13th member of the St. Eunan's Hall of Fame.

In a playing career that spanned 25 years, James won his first County title in 1959 when he won the Juvenile title. His first major honour playing for Donegal came in 1966, when he played right corner forward on Donegal's Ulster U-21 winning team, a team on which he was joined by his brother Anthony, who lined out at right-half forward. A year later in 1967, he won his first Senior County Championship medal when Eunan's defeated the mighty St. Joseph's by 1-13 to 1-09. Two years later in 1969, James collected his second County Senior medal when Eunan's again defeated St. Joseph's, this time on a 0-10 to 1-04 scoreline. James picked up his third county medal in 1972, this time defeating Clan na Gael (Donegal town – now Four Masters) by 2-12 to 1-08. An accomplished hurler, James also picked up a County Hurling medal in '72 with Eunan's. During this period from the mid 60's through to the mid 70's, Donegal had what many consider to be the finest team never to win an All-Ireland and James played his part as Donegal won 3 McKenna cups, 3 Lagan Cups, 2 Ulster Senior Football C'ships and appeared in 3 League semi-finals in Croke Park. He also won a County League medal in 1974, and in 1975 he was named Senior Club Player of the Year. He won a County Shield medal in 1982 and he won his fourth and final County Senior medal in 1983 when Eunan's defeated Ardara by 0-08 to 0-03. His 2 brothers, Paddy & Anthony have also played for Donegal at Senior Inter-County level, while his father Anthony (also known as 'Stit') won Ulster Junior & Senior Hurling medals with Donegal in 1928 & 32. James also won 3-in-a-row Inter Firms Senior Championships and played in 4 All-Ireland Sevens Finals and 3 All-Ireland Post Office Championship finals.

When he finished playing James went on to become a referee, he is Vice-Chairperson of the club's Minor Board and now he can be seen on Sunday mornings out coaching the stars of tomorrow at O'Donnell Park (indeed the Gallagher family are known in these parts as "The Gallaghers from the Park") as well as being the club's unofficial photographer. Indeed on the night James was presented with his award, he was back out with his camera in less than five minutes after receiving a standing ovation from all in the room, taking photographs of all the other winners on the night. Anyone who knows the man would say that is typical of "The Great" James Gallagher.



Captain Kavanagh content on homely pastures

By Alan Foley (Donegal Democrat)

Two years ago, when a bubbly Donegal rolled into Croke Park for the NFL Division One final against this afternoon's opponents Mayo, a quad-muscle injury suffocated Rory Kavanagh's hopes of starting. That morning in Santry, he had battled through the pain to convince everyone, himself included, of his fitness. The only assessment he obtained though, from backroom team members Ryan Porter and Paul McIver, were shaking heads, solemnly spoken apologies and firm handshakes. Kavanagh was all but a non-runner. "I was so disappointed that morning, but I knew that I just wasn't right," Kavanagh says. "Even in the fitness test, I was struggling with the sprint and there and then, I thought that was it. When named as a substitute, I thought the only chance of me being needed was if we were really in serious trouble."

Brian McIver sprung two surprises before throw-in as Paddy McConigley and Brendan Devenney were both included in the line-up from the off against Mayo, despite fears over their respective leg and knee worries. Substitute Kavanagh, patched up but still weary, was the manager's last ace. A contingency plan.

Donegal started well, but began to lose their way. They appeared to be letting the glistening trophy fumble through their greasy fingertips. Mayo, from a standing start, were gaining momentum and when Ciaran Bonner went down in a heap, Kavanagh thought he might get the call. He didn't. With a minute to go and the scores tied at 10 points apiece, captain Neil Gallagher was then the recipient of a blackened eye, and the spluttering of blood meant he would play no further part.

"Maybe it was just in the pandemonium that was happening at the time," Kavanagh adds. "But I was told to go on for Neil. The first run I made, I slipped. I really felt uneasy as I knelt there, it but just willed myself to give it another go. The next time I moved, the ball came to me, and I managed to cut inside and put it over. Eamon McGee and Adrian Sweeney then knocked over a couple more points and we had won. Thankfully, it all worked out in the end."

This afternoon, Donegal and Mayo cross paths again. Both lost their opening round fixtures in the NFL and see the two points on offer today as both a need and a want. Kavanagh, who has decorated O'Donnell Park in the black and amber of St Eunan's since his childhood, might just let his mind wander for a brief second as he leads Donegal in the ground he grew up in.

"I remember going down to O'Donnell Park with the under-8s on Sunday mornings when there was about 100 kids there," he adds. "We used to play on the old back pitch, which was known as the swamp. People like Christy Callaghan, Michael Houston, Martin Rafferty and Michael Gibbons used to train us and I suppose football just went from there really."

"It's a tremendous honour for me personally to get the chance to captain my county at O'Donnell Park and it's something that won't be forgotten on me. I've had a lot of good times there and this will be something different, and of course, we'd love to get a win as well to get ourselves going again."

There may be a lingering winter chill, but Kavanagh, now 26, can surely find some warmth in familiar surroundings today. He, and Donegal, can take centre-stage. There'll be no need to be sneak in from the shadows like he had to do before.

GAA - Allianz National Football League Final

Historic League title for Donegal

Donegal.....0-13 Mayo.....0-10

Report by Chris McNulty

They say that we don't do things easy in Donegal. Yesterday's historic National Football League final at Croke Park proved the notion should there have been any lingering doubts.

Brian McIver's fantastic troops clinched the county's first ever National League trophy amid euphoric scenes before a crowd of 29,433 with a late surge of three magnificent scores from substitutes Rory Kavanagh, Eamon McGee and Adrian Sweeney securing a three-point win.

Going into the match on the back of a dreadful finals record - 13 played, 13 lost since 1992 before yesterday - many feared that Donegal would buckle again yesterday and indeed for a brief spell in the second half it looked as if Mayo might just shade it.

But, as they have done all through this campaign, the green and gold dug deep and their big men came up trumps. Entering a nerve-rattling eight minutes of stoppage time - added on following an injury to Ciaran Bonner - the sides were level at ten points apiece.

Then, Donegal said that it was time for silverware. Rory Kavanagh slotted over after powerful play from Adrian Sweeney and Eamon McGee somehow managed to find the range with a left-footed effort from distance to put two in it.

McGee's effort, one could argue, was sucked over the crossbar by the grateful Donegal faithful behind the Canal End goal. The famous old stadium shook to its foundations when Dungloe's Adrian Sweeney fired over. It was quite fitting that 'Eddie' would have the last say in what was a nail-biting contest.

Threw into the fray with seven minutes remaining, Sweeney again donned the mantle of the 'impact sub' and steadied the ship to great effect. He fielded well after his introduction and his wonderful score was a tremendous way to cap off a fine day at the office for his side.

Aiming to collect a first piece of silverware in 15 years, Donegal were boosted in the lead up to yesterday's clash with the news that influential midfielder and talisman Kevin Cassidy was cleared from a two-week suspension after being sent off in last week's semi final.

The mood in the Tir Chonaill camp was further lifted as three of the four injury concerns were deemed fit enough to take their respective places in the starting line-up.

Rory Kavanagh failed to shake off a thigh strain and was Donegal's only absentee, but Neil McGee, Paddy McConigley and Brendan Devenney all started, meaning there were two changes from the side that had been named at lunchtime on Friday.

Those alterations saw Devenney and McConigley replace McMenamin and Donoghue respectively as the same 1-15 as started against Kildare commenced yesterday afternoon.

Devenney's afternoon lasted a half an hour, when he was replaced by Kevin McMenamin. Donegal held a three-point advantage (0-7 to 0-4) at this juncture.

Mayo boss John O'Mahoney was not without injury worries of his own and he, too, made two changes from the side he had named at the end of the week. Michael Conroy and James Nallen came in for Aidan Kilcoyne and skipper Kevin O'Neill with Peadar Gardiner taking the armband.

It took some time for the beaten All-Ireland finalists from 2006 to find their rhythm as they failed to raise a flag during the opening fifteen minutes of action. By the time Conor Mortimer split the Canal End uprights for the first time, Donegal were four to the good.

Two scores from Brian Roper began the day in the perfect fashion for Brian McIver's charges before the lead was doubled with two scores in the space of a minute from McFadden and Cassidy.

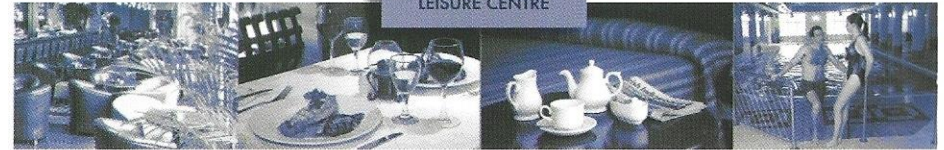
Colm McFadden doubled his own tally, coolly slotting over a '45' on 22 minutes after two Mortimer points had brought Mayo to life.

Alan Dillon, free, and a point from play by midfielder Pat Hart cut Donegal's lead to just a single point and one

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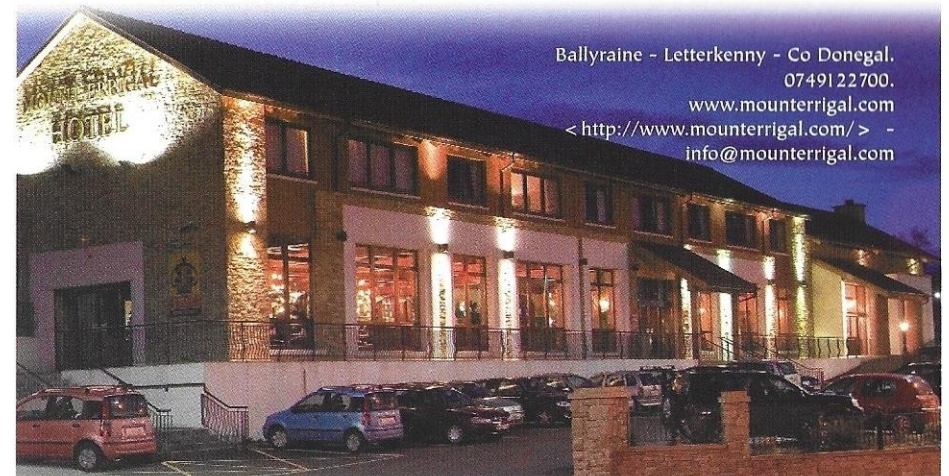
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could forgiven anyone in the Tir Chonaill contingent for thinking that perhaps Mayo were about to gain control.

For all their possession in the first half, Donegal held just a two-point advantage going in at the break with Roper and Ciaran Bonner adding to the tally and Pat Harte knocking over a majestic kick from the '45' for the half's concluding point.

Just before Harte made it a two-point game, Paul Durcan came to the rescue of Donegal when he denied Mortimer from levelling the game with a fine stop after the Mayo man burst clear.

Four further frees by Mortimer and a score from play by Andy Moran had Mayo level with Donegal registering just three points in the 35minutes of normal time in part two through a Colm McFadden (free), Ciaran Bonner and Kevin McMenamin.

After a lengthy stoppage due to an injury to Ciaran Bonner, the board went up to signal eight minutes of stoppage time. Croke Park breathed a sigh of nervousness. It shouldn't have bothered. Kavanagh, McGee and Sweeney soon had the Tir Chonaill faithful dancing in the stands like it was September.

And, they had every right to. After 15years of a trophy famine, yesterday's win was long overdue and it will now surely end the nagging 'bridesmaids' tag that has haunted us since '92.

Yesterday, bridesmaid became bride. There will be little in the way of a honeymoon though with Armagh looming on the horizon. The tangerine clad side roll into Ballybofey in just under five weeks time as the real business of the summer begins.

Donegal: Paul Durcan; Neil McGee, Paddy Campbell, Karl Lacey; Paddy McConigley, Barry Monaghan, Barry Dunnion; Neil Gallagher, Kevin Cassidy (0-1); Ciaran Bonner (0-2), Brian Roper (0-3), Christy Toye; Brendan Devenney, Colm McFadden (0-3, 1f, 1 '45'), Michael Hegarty. Subs: Kevin McMenamin (for Devenney, 30mins, 0-1); Thomas Donoghue (for McConigley, 47mins); Eamon McGee (for N.McGee, 47mins, 0-1); Rory Kavanagh (for Gallagher, 59mins, 0-1); Adrian Sweeney (for Bonner, 63mins, 0-1).

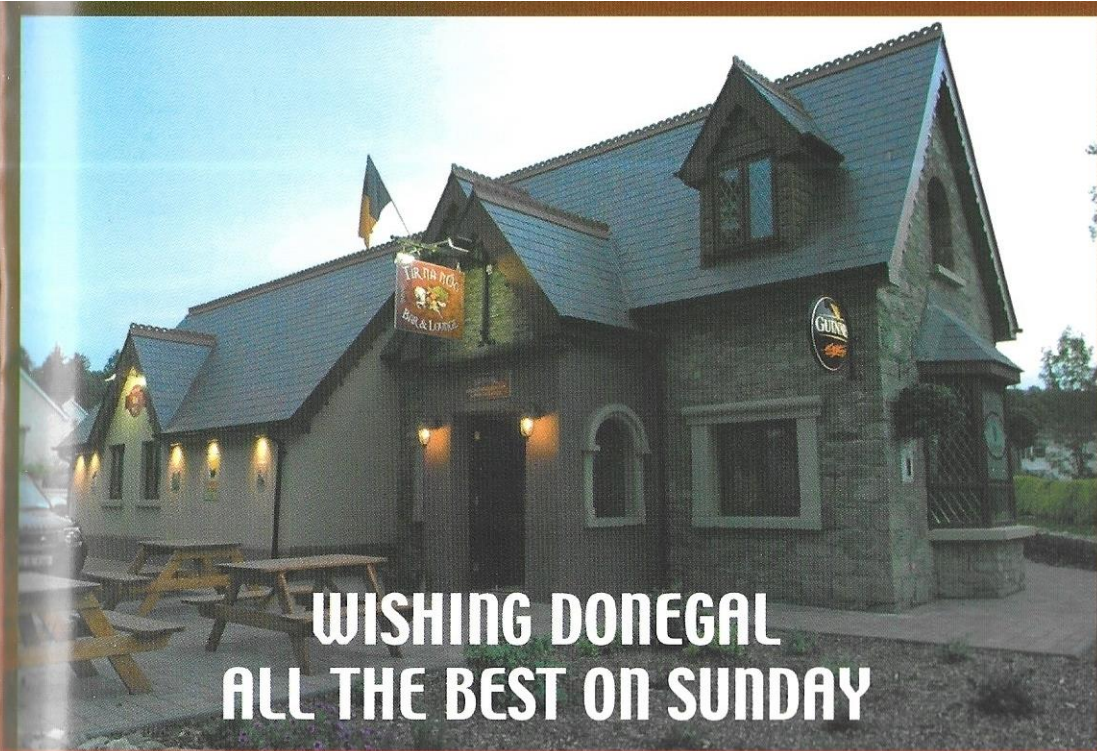
Mayo: David Clarke; Keith Higgins, James Kilcullen, Liam O'Malley; Enda Devenney, Billy Joe Padden, Peadar Gardiner; Pat Harte (0-2), David Heaney; Alan Dillon (0-1, 1f), Andy Moran (0-1), Michael Conroy; Conor Mortimer (0-6, 5f), Ger Brady, James Nallen. Subs: Aidan Higgins (for Kilcullen, 19mins); Kevin O'Neill (for Conroy, 42mins); Aidan Kilcoyne (for Dillon, 70mins); Trevor Howley (for A.Higgins, 70mins).

Referee: John Bannon (Longford)

20 GAA QUESTIONS with Peter Campbell (Sports Editor, Donegal Democrat)

- 1 What famous Mayo player won a Railway Cup medal with Ulster while playing with Donegal in 1992?
- 2 Who is the new manager of Kerins O'Rahillys in Kerry, succeeding Jack O'Connor?
- 3 Outside of Dublin, name either of the two clubs in Leinster who have won the All-Ireland Club football title?
- 4 Brian Roper set the record of appearances for Donegal in their last league game against Kerry. Who holds the record for championship appearances?
- 5 When Donegal met Derry in the 1993 Ulster final in rain-washed Clones, who was the Donegal centre half-back?
- 6 Martin Carney is now regarded as a Mayoman. What was his last year playing championship for Donegal?
- 7 St. Eunan's lifted the Dr. Maguire Cup in 2009. How many times have they now been Donegal champions?
- 8 What Donegal player won an All-Star in 1993?
- 9 What was the personal tally of Manus Boyle in the All-Ireland final of 1992?
- 10 How many counties has John O'Mahony managed to win the Nestor Cup?
- 11 Donegal have reached the National League final on how many occasions?
- 12 True or False, Mayo are next to Kerry in the National League roll of honour?
- 13 When Mayo last reached the All-Ireland final in 2006, who was their captain?
- 14 What is the name of the park in Ballina?
- 15 Donegal are due to play Galway in the league in Duggan Park. Where is Duggan Park?
- 16 How many times have Donegal won the Ulster Minor Championship?
- 17 Who was Donegal's top scorer in all games in 2007?
- 18 Who were the last Mayo club to win the Andy Merrigan Cup?
- 19 Who were the last Donegal club to contest an Ulster Senior Club Championship final?
- 20 Who was the last winning All-Ireland senior captain for Mayo?

Answers on page 22



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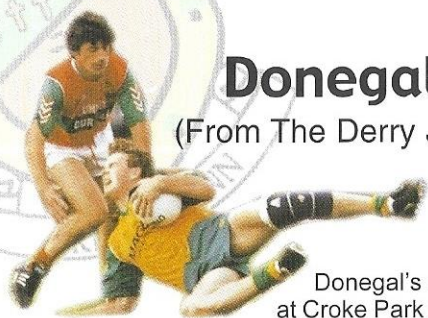
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Donegal's Day of Delight

(From The Derry Journal of Tuesday, August 18th, 1992)

Donegal..... 0-13 Mayo.....0-9



Donegal's senior footballers have finally come of age. At 4.45 pm at Croke Park on Sunday, a life-long ambition had been realised. They had qualified for and All-Ireland final after almost 100 years of life in the "also rans" section of senior intercounty football. Having lost the four previous semi-finals to Offaly, Galway (twice) and Meath, they made no mistake this time around.

While Mayo led on four occasions over the 70-odd minutes, a strong final quarter saw Donegal pulling clear to set themselves up with a showdown with the much-fancied Dublin next month.

Jarlath Jennings converted a free from 20 metres to give the Connacht champions a 0-8 to 0-6 advantage on 45 minutes. But Donegal found another gear and rattled over seven points while conceding just one in the final 25 minutes to fashion a famous win.

Twenty seconds into added time, Donegal substitute, Barry Cunningham was sent clear by Tony Boyle. He bounced the ball once and just as he was about to unleash, he was clattered by Mayo's Thomas Tierney. Tommy Sugrue, the Kerry referee, pointed to the penalty spot. Martin McHugh, who hadn't scored up until that moment, stroked the ball over the black spot with the last kick of the game and raced away to celebrate with his team mates. It really was a moment to savour.

For long periods, Donegal dictated the pace and controlled various sectors. But for all those fine attributes, they kicked an almost unforgivable 16 wides - eight in either half. The introduction of Manus Boyle seven minutes after the restart was to prove crucial to the cause. While he failed to covert his first free, he rattled over the next three in that crucial last quarter which helped steer the Tir Conaill men to a never-to-be-forgotten win.

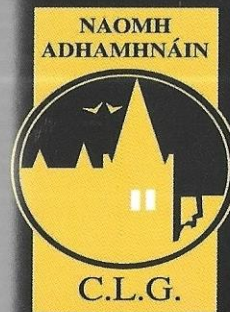
In many ways, a victory via a mediocre performance could well suit Donegal. Dublin, the likely winners of their semi-final against Clare, will certainly fancy their chances after this Donegal showing. Little do Paddy Cullen and Co know that the Ulster champions have so much more to offer.

DONEGAL - Gary Walsh, Barry McGowan, Matt Gallagher, Noel Hegarty, Donal Reid, Martin Gavigan, Martin Shovlin, Anthony Molloy, Brian Murray (0-1), Joyce McMullan, Martin McHugh (0-1) pen., Tommy Ryan, Declan Bonner (0-4) one '50', three frees, Tony Boyle (0-2), James McHugh (0-2) one free. Subs - Manus Boyle (0-3) all frees for McMullen (42 mins) and Barry Cunningham for Ryan (47 mins).

MAYO - Gabriel Irwin, Kevin Byrne, Peter Ford, Dermot Flanagan, Anthony McGarry, Thomas Tierney, Peter Butler, Sean Maher (0-1), T.J Kilgallon, Jarlath Jennings (0-4) all frees, Kevin Staunton, Tony Morely, Raymond Dempsey (0-2) one free, Liam McHale (0-1), Anthony Finnerty (0-1). Subs - Noel Durcan for Finnerity (47 mins) and Pdraig Brogan for Maher (55 mins).

REFEREE - Tommy Sugrue (Kerry).

by Ciaran O'Donnell



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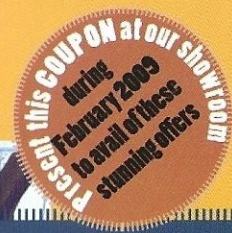
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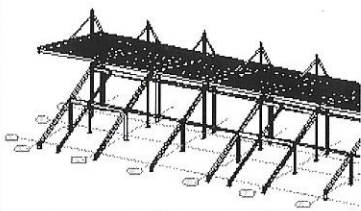
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Answers: 1, Padraig Brogan; 2, Denis 'Ogie' Moran; 3, Portlaoise and Balinglass; 4, Adrian Sweeney; 5, Paul Carr; 6, 1978; 7, Eleven; 8, present manager, John Joe Doherty; 9, 0-9; 10, Three (Mayo, Galway and Leitrim); 11, Four (1993, 1995, 1997 and 2007); 12, True (they have won 11 times; Kerry lead with 18); 13, David Heaney; 14, James Stephens Park; 15, Ballinasloe; 16, Five (1956 1985 1991 1996 2006); 17, Colm McFadden; 18, Ballina Stephenites in 2005 (Crossmolina won in 2001); 19, Killybegs in 1991; 20, Sean Flanagan.

Donegal football and Mayo men

By Tom Comack (Donegal Democrat/ People's Press)

The Atlantic coastline is not the only thing that Donegal and Mayo have in common. Down the years great links have been forged between the two counties in all walks of life; none more so than in sport and in particular in Gaelic games.

Donegal men and women have moved south along the coast to Mayo. Will we ever forget the departure of Martin Carney? Mind you, Tir Chonaill has not done too badly out of the movement northwards either.

All in all, the influx from west Connacht has been good for Donegal, with the GAA one of the main benefactors. Of all the 40 clubs in Donegal - 39 football and one hurling - I would venture to say you would be hard pressed to find one that did not have a Mayo man involved at some stage down the years. From Bundoran to Malin and from the Rosses to Lifford, they have left their imprint and many continue to still do.

Young Michael Murphy, who is one of the brightest prospects to emerge in Donegal football in recent times, is a member of the Donegal panel this afternoon has very strong Mayo ties. His father Mick is the current Games and Coaching manager in Donegal, and is a native of Ballina.

Brendan Roache graced the playing fields of the north-west with both St Eunan's and Downings. Brendan is from Foxboro, between Ballina and Killala. Ballina has particularly strong links with Donegal and especially Letterkenny. One of the most recent exiles to touch down in the Cathedral Town is current St Eunan's senior football manager Eamon O'Boyle. Eamon was born and raised in the heart of Ballina and is a dyed in the wool Stephenites' man. He won a number of Mayo senior championships alongside Liam McHale, Kevin McStay, Jimmy Browne, Tommy Lyons - a member of John O'Mahony's backroom team - for the Ballina nursery during the 1980's.

Sticking with the management theme, Martin Regan, hails from Charlestown, and now domiciled in Glenties, is into his second year in charge of the fortunes of the Donegal minor footballers. Martin is also father of former county secretary and current county assistant treasurer Crona Regan.

Mayo men have donned the green and gold too. Jim Brennan from Ballina, and resident of Dungloe for the best part of three decades soldered in the Tir Chonaill colours for a number of years at the end of the 1970's and in the early part of the 1980's. During his time here, he played club football with St Eunan's, Dungloe and Na Rossa, and is still togging out most weekend as a referee.

Another favourite Mayo son to feature for Donegal was Knockmore's Padraig Brogan. Padraig played for just one season under Brian McEniff, in 1991, before returning to the green and red. Of course, the late Sean Reilly was a great servant of Donegal football before his untimely death. Seamus played with both his native and adopted counties and later threw himself in to club management, with Bundoran, and was the Donegal U21 manager at the time of his untimely death in August 1999.

Even long before the 70's and 80's, in a bygone era, the great Paddy Prendergast, a Mayo and Connacht legend played with a number of clubs in the county and for one season with Donegal. Another Mayo man, Sean Reilly, a garda in Ballintra, went even one better than the great Paddy. Sean also lined out for Ulster in the Railway Cup in the 1950's. By and large the Mayo influence has been good for Donegal - all of which makes the loss of Martin Carney a little less painful.

Liam O'Reilly, in Dungloe, and his brother Terry in Ballybofey are both first cousins of the legendary Willie Joe Padden and of course related to Billy Joe Padden who will line out for Mayo this afternoon. Alfie McHale and Eddie O'Malley in Letterkenny, Gareth Horkan in Milford, Martin O'Malley of Naomh Brid and Anthony Burke in Carndonagh are others that have done their share down the years - all of whom will have divided loyalties this afternoon.

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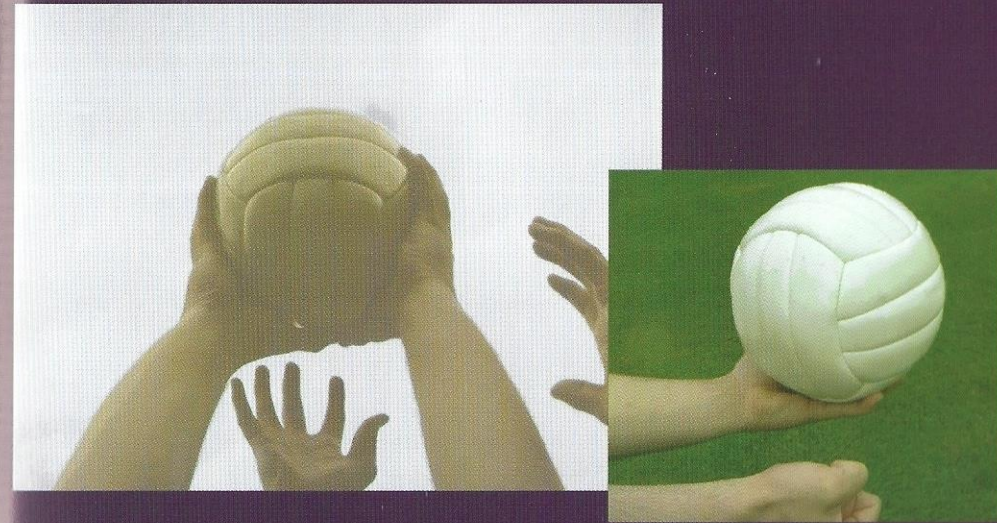
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