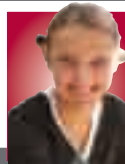


# Musings



with Marta Kaminska

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## News from Zakopane?

I am just back from an exotic holiday in Poland. I had planned to visit Dubai but my empty wallet put that on hold, so I decided to go straight to my sunny homeland. It was a nightmare. I don't remember when last I found myself in such extreme temperatures. During the day it was almost 35 degrees in the shade. The thermometer in the sun couldn't cope with the extreme temperatures. There was no respite at night. It's not easy sleeping in an apartment without air conditioning when the temperature seems to be a million degrees.

In these extreme temperatures, my dad decided to take me for a trip to Zakopane. It sounds great but the trip started and finished the same day. So, after rising at five, we left the house at six and spent three hours in a Fiat Panda, sandwiched between pork chops on the back seat. I dreamt of coffee and cigarettes and later we ascended the mountains, took a few pictures, bought some local cheese as a souvenir, and in the evening returned home exhausted. Trust me, that's how it was. I probably should be angry and complain, but not this time. It was really great to see Tatra again, to be at one with the verdant surroundings and take time to sit and look at the mountains as they reach heavenward.

It was also great to see all the places from the past, the small mound where I had my first skiing accident, the great restaurant in the town centre. The sweat ran down my back, the horses looked as if they were laughing at my terrible physical condition. Anyway, I was really brave and I walked along unknown trails thinking about this great town and the fat sheep and their woolly covering. I realised that Zakopane has really changed. Now, there are a million new shops, two million more tourists and millions and millions of new hotels. The mountains have stayed put and my favourite mountain, Giewont (which resembles a sleeping knight with a cross on

his head), hasn't changed. He didn't change and he didn't even get married. The caves are also the same, empty with no-one living there. They just have more visitors.

So, take note, I have to say that Zakopane is keeping very well and Tatra has stayed put and after one week's holiday in Poland in extreme temperatures, I returned to Roscommon and for the first time in my life, I was happy to see that it was raining. Now I definitely understand the phrase that you don't miss something until it's gone. Next week I will probably be cursing myself and my attitude to the rain, but at the moment I am really happy with the Irish weather and the next time the rain makes me crazy I intend to enconce myself in an oven to remind me of my Polish holiday!

### Co słychać w Zakopanym?

Głównie ptaki. No i im bliżej południa to nie da się nie usłyszeć zgłodniałych turystów. A tak już bardziej poważnie, to właśnie wróciłam z egzotycznych wakacji w... Polsce. Planowałam zwiedzać Dubaj, jednak niemożność finansowa rzuciła mną wprost w pałac słońcem ojczyznę. Dawno już nie musiałam egzystować w tak ekstremalnych warunkach. Mam tu na myśli pogodę. Za dnia było jakieś 35 stopni w cieniu, a termometr w słońcu wariował i brakowało mu skali więc trudno było określić prawidłową temperaturę. Nawet noc nie przynosiła wytchnienia- raczej ciężko się śpi w mieszkaniu bez wentylacji, gdzie temperatura odczuwalna to jakieś milion stopni.

I w takich właśnie warunkach- prawdopodobnie z powodu przegrzania- w moim tacie narodziła się wspaniała idea, by zabrać córkę do Zakopanego. Brzmi całkiem niezłe tylko, że wyjazd ten otwierał się i zamykał tego samego dnia. Więc

pubudka o piątej, wyjazd o szóstej, trzy godziny w nagrzanym do czerwoności fiacie typu Panda, kanapeczka z kotletem na tylnym siedzeniu z nogami przy suficie, marzenia o kawce i papierosku, marsz w góry, kilka fotek, oscypek na pamiątkę i wieczorem na powrót w domku z jezorem wywalonym do pasa. I tak też było. I niby powinienam się złościć i narzekać, jednak nie tym razem. Naprawdę fajnie było znów ujrzeć Tatrę. Choć na chwilę zanurzyć się w tej skąpanej skwarem zieleni i zacząć oko na wznoszących się chyba do nieba górach. I fajnie też wspominać: o tu pierwsza gleba zaliczona na nartach, a tam kiedyś był świetny bar mleczny. Choć pot lał mi się po plecach a konie zdawały się wyśmiewać moją żalną kondycję fizyczną to ja dzielnie kroczyłam bliżej nieokreślonymi ścieżkami i dumalam sobie o tym fajnym mieście i o owieczkach w grubych futerkach. I okazało się, że miasto Zakopane bardzo się zmieniło. Jest teraz milion nowych sklepów, dwa miliony więcej turystów i milion milionów hoteli. A góry jak stały tak stoją. Giewont- ten śpiący rycearz z krzyżem na czole- nic a nic się nie zmienił, ani nie przytył ani się nie ożenił. Nosał- dalej jest Nosałem i nawet kataru nie miewa. Jaskinie jak były puste, tak wciąż pozostają niezamieszkałe- tylko gości jakby więcej.

I tak to właśnie obwieszczam wszem i wobec, że Zakopane ma się dobrze a Tatry stoją tam gdzie stały. A po tygodniowych wakacjach w Polsce podczas skrajnego upału, wróciłam do Roscommon- po raz pierwszy w życiu ciesząc się z tego, że znów pada. I teraz zaczynam doskonale rozumieć powiedzenie, że doceniamy coś dopiero po stracie. Pewnie za tydzień przeklnę sama siebie myślą- jak ja mogłam tęsknić za deszczem. Póki co napawam się irlandzką pogodą a gdy znów deszcz mi się znudzi to chyba zamknę się na kilka godzin w piekarniku i by poczuć się jak na wakacjach w Polsce.

# Football heroics and golfing greatness!

There's an old saying which says 'a rising tide rises all boats' and if ever a county experienced its rising tide, Roscommon did on Sunday. And after their wonderful win in the Connacht final against Sligo, it'll be a long time again before any Roscommon boat is sunk, or even holed.

Now I'm sure the whole paper will be full of the great victory, and rightly so, and it might even be possible they mightn't have enough room for my little piece, but, if they find space for me, I have to say that the Rossies' victory didn't surprise me in the least. On Saturday night, in the company of two very wise footballing brains, The People's own resident expert Tony Mac, and Mayo native but long-time Roscommon resident, motoring correspondent, Padraig Deane, we just couldn't figure out how Sligo were such raging hot favourites.

Their victories over Mayo and Galway, eye-catching as they were, didn't stand up to a lot of scrutiny, when Mayo were subsequently sent packing by Longford, and a very mediocre Wexford outfit put an end to Galway's season. It's a few months since I told you that things were not good in Galway's camp, under Joe Kernan, and I advised not to back Galway to win any Connacht title - throw in the fact that Louth, who are the true Leinster champions, minus the cup, were beaten by Roscommon in the league, and the whole thing just didn't add up. As a result I'm off to Boylesports to pick up my modest winnings - I didn't wager a lot, but, nonetheless, I had enough confidence in the primrose and blue to put a small bit of my hard-earned few bob on them.

Anyway I'm told the county town was absolutely thronged on Sunday night

so well done to Fergal O'Donnell and everyone involved - it's great to have something to lift spirits in these hard times.

Back to the weekend, and on Friday evening I found myself in Roscommon Golf Club taking part in the Creggs Rugby Club Golf Classic. The whole thing is a great idea to raise much-needed funds for the Rugby Club (and it's no harm to the golf club either), and the committee of Jack the Higher (John Cunningham), Albert Looby and Anthony Duignan pulled out all the stops to make it an extraordinary success. Fifty three teams, which at four golfers per team, is a lot of golfers (my maths isn't so good) took part, and ensured the golf club and course was choc-o-bloc for both Friday and Saturday. I have often told you about the delights of Castlereagh Golf Club but in fairness to Roscommon it is an absolutely top class course as well. As it is an 18-hole course, where Castlereagh is nine, it is a daunting task to complete a round, and while I write this (it is now Monday evening) my short legs are still feeling the strain.

Our team of Duff, Jimmy Gavin, Dinny Monaghan, and me, played brilliantly, and were in fierce hard luck with the out of bounds, lost balls, and mis-hits. Only for all of them we would surely have been challenging for top honours, and while, like the Louth footballers we won't take the matter any further, I was finding it hard to understand why our names weren't appearing on the leaderboard. However when I found out that we didn't put in any card, I was a 'little more OK' with the lack of prizes coming our way, and I hereby apologise to the committee for any abuse they may have suffered at my hands.

Anyway our own internal match (me and Jimmy against Duff and Dinny) went to the wire (and the water, the rough and the forest) and as we drove off on the 17th we were two down and looking as if we would have to hand over the fiver (each). However an amazing comeback which saw us cover the last two holes in a never-to-be-revealed score, which included a magically disappearing ball that vanished into thin air on the fairway, saw us finish up all square and claim a hugely satisfying moral victory. The return will take place shortly - so watch this space.

Golf over and it was off to Mikeen's where our annual rugby tour group were having a few pints with one of our regular tourists, Johnny Whyte, who has recently retired from his job in Donamon Castle. I won't go into the details, but we had a most enjoyable get-together and some of us did better than others out of the kitty - no names, but on a personal basis I definitely got a good return on my investment.

Anyway, here's wishing Johnny well, and may he have a long and happy retirement. Then on Saturday night we went back to the golf club for the presentation ceremony and, despite the lack of anything coming our way, (although Duff somehow got his hands on an umbrella) it was a great night of nostalgia, and fun and good craic. The hugely talented Albert Looby brought out the guitar and played and sang, keeping us all entertained - he was absolutely brilliant and well done Albert. He got a little help from some of us, which he could well have done without, and I enjoyed it thoroughly. Again congrats to Jack the Higher and his helpers and fair play to them. Jack the Lower introduced his new driver,

which he had bought earlier in the day, but like the new three iron which I too had purchased earlier, and which Dinny pointed out to my sorrow was actually a ladies club, I think it needed more time to be broken in.

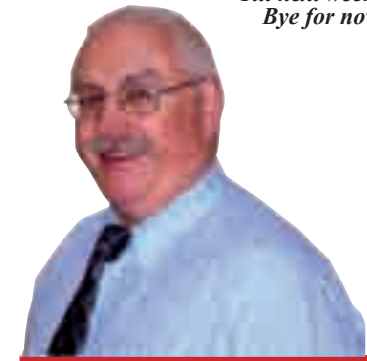
Anyway on to other things and this weekend all roads lead to Donamon Castle where the annual family day is taking place on this Sunday. The whole thing kicks off with mass at 12.30 (open-air if weather permits) and there's musical delights there after with the New Avengers, the Castlereagh Brass and Reed Band, Patsy McCall, and the Conquerors. There's the big auction taking place during the afternoon, and, for the kids, there's a bouncy castle, pony rides, face painting and special appearances from Mickey Mouse, and my favourite, Dora the Explorer. Danny Burke is the ever-popular MC while local Fine Gael county councillor, Domnick Connolly is doing the auction. There will be stalls on the day, and if you wish to have a barbecue you are more than welcome to bring along your own.

If you don't want to do your own cooking there will be sandwiches and teas and coffees and minerals for sale. It's always a good day out and this year should be no exception - let's hope the man above looks favourably on the occasion and has a quiet word with the weather god. On the same day Martin Blighe has asked me to tell you all that the Donamon Dynamo Cycling Club have a major cycle race starting in Castlecoote at 12 o'clock, travelling by Black's lake, on by Kilbeggnet Church, through Creggs and back to Castlecoote, turning left at Cattigan's Pub, and covering the same route six or seven times. There will be approximately 50-60 cyclists in ac-

tion so Martin asks that anyone going to the castle, please be aware the race is taking place, and take due care with their driving. Cyclists are very vulnerable.

Finally for this week Eamon Spillane, principal of Knockcroghery National School, has asked me to tell you all that he has an authentic Irish rugby jersey, signed by Lions Captain, Paul O'Connell, on offer, with all proceeds going to fund the sunflower rooms in Knockcroghery National School, for autistic children. As everyone who follows rugby knows, O'Connell is a true giant of world rugby and the cause is especially worthy, so if anyone out there wants to help out please contact me, through the offices of The Roscommon People with whatever bid you may wish to make - thanks in advance.

Till next week,  
Bye for now



Frankly  
Speaking ...  
with Frank Brandon