

2010 Connacht SFC Final

'Now football is the topic on everyone's lips'

What a transformation in Roscommon football in the space of a couple of days!

Nobody wanted to talk about Roscommon football in the past few months –however now football is the topic on everyone's lips.

Last Sunday was a red-letter day for Roscommon football. We are now back in the big time for the first time in a number of years. It is 1978 since we last won the U-21 and senior Connacht titles in the same year.

It was a superb team performance and every single player put their heads on the block for the cause. Indeed there were some Roscommon players who performed to a level that they have never achieved before.

Fergal did a great job on the mental side of the preparations because in truth this was a performance that looked unlikely to happen given our form over the past few months.

Every player played a huge part on Sunday but some deserve special mention. From the very start Michael Finneran took the game by the scruff of the neck and his performance set the tone for the match.

Seanie McDermott did a fantastic job marking the very dangerous David Kelly. Seanie was really up for this game and played very well. Kelly got only one shot at goal and that was brilliantly saved by the very impressive Geoffrey Claffey. Indeed Claffey had a tremendous game and he varied his kick-outs superbly throughout.

Cathal Cregg was another who was inspirational. Time and time again he won vital ball and drove forward into the heart of the Sligo defence. Both Sligo wing-backs came into the game with high reputations but both were cleaned out by Cregg on the day.

David Casey deserves special mention too. He has overcome chronic knee problems to give



Donie Shine pictured placing the ball for the winning free at McHale Park, Castlebar last Sunday. Picture: Andrew Fox.

everything for the team. He drove forward to great effect last Sunday in an all-action display.

When any team has as good a free-taker as Donie Shine they will always have a good chance. From play and from frees, Donie turned in a stunning performance. There were heroes all over the pitch.

It was good to see Senan Kilbride togged out last Sunday too. He will be a huge addition if he is ready for

the next game.

It was a very entertaining game and a welcome relief from the drab and dour Ulster final and some of the other negative football we have seen in recent times.

It will take Sligo a while to get over this defeat. Having beaten Galway and Mayo it must be hard for them to have lost to Roscommon. Football is a strange game and but for some inspirational points from Alan

Costello, Sligo would have lost by more. The best team certainly won the match.

Cork a concern

This weekend there are interesting matches in prospect in the qualifiers. Sligo and Monaghan will have it all to do after losing their respec-

tive provincial finals last Sunday. I hope Sligo can re-group and beat Down as it would be good to see them in the quarter-finals.

I expect Cork, Dublin and Kildare to win the other three games. We will all be looking forward with great anticipation to the quarter-final draw on Sunday night. We will also be hoping to avoid Cork in the quarter-finals. They certainly look the strongest of the qualifier teams.



Tony Mac talks GAA

BULLSEYE FROM PEOPLE COLUMNIST TONY!

He was deadly accurate in his heyday as a forward and he remains deadly accurate with his weekly GAA insights in Roscommon's most popular and most widely read newspaper!

In last week's Roscommon People our columnist Tony McManus showed all of his experience and confirmed his status as a terrific reader of the modern game with what was to prove a remarkably accurate assessment of how matters might unfold in Castlebar.

It just goes to show that the man who was a leader in the field with Roscommon for many years is the GAA columnist to read before all others!

– Paul Healy

What Tony Mc said last week: "Roscommon can take heart from the great displays in recent weeks from teams like Louth, Wexford, and Limerick. Roscommon have just as good

players as any of those teams. If we approach Sunday's game with the right attitude and in a positive frame of mind, there is no reason why we cannot cause a shock. We should not be intimidated mentally by this game. In fact Sligo will be most uncomfortable with the favourites tag. They are sitting ducks for us if we go into the game with the right approach.

"The team who wins breaking ball in the middle third of the field will win this Connacht final. There has been a hesitancy in Roscommon's play this year and that aspect will have to be gone on Sunday if we are to win. We have to get the devil back into our play. If we can rediscover the traditional Roscommon fighting spirit and contest every ball as if our lives depended on it, we will win the game, simple as that. Some of our players will have to step up to the mark more than they have ever done before, but I am

convinced that we have the panel of players to win this final.

"Roscommon are 70 minutes from winning an unlikely Connacht title. I expect Roscommon to rise to the occasion and maybe the free taking and general score taking ability of Donie Shine might tip the balance in our favour."



Help the Rossies – support the Supporters' draw

The Roscommon GAA Supporters Club in Dublin has appealed to all Roscommon Supporters living in the Greater Dublin Region to get behind the Roscommon team in an "effective manner".

The Supporters Club suggests that

this can be done by buying or helping with the sales of tickets in the annual Roscommon GAA Supporters Draw. The tickets are now on sale at €10 each and prizes include four excellent stand tickets for the All-Ireland finals in September. There are also a number

of consumer-type prizes to be won. In charge of tickets sales is the club joint-treasurer, Mr. Joe Murray, 1 Grove Road, Finglas, Dublin 11. All finance raised is used in training and preparing the Roscommon teams.

The Supporters Club also calls on

Roscommon supporters in Dublin, Wicklow and Kildare to make contact with the club secretary and cordially invites supporters to attend the club's meetings which take place in Maye's of Dorset Street, Dublin 1 on the first Tuesday of every month from 8.30

pm. The club secretary is Mr. Vinnie Moran, 18 Ashville Close, Esker Lane, Lucan. Tel (086) 1727787 or contact by email: vinnie@sierra.ie. Membership of the Roscommon Supporters Club, Dublin is open to all who support the Roscommon GAA teams.