

Joe is so 'Keane' to take on Nemo

By: Padraig Burns

Crossmolina forward, Joe Keane, remembers vividly the day that the championship campaign nearly came to a shuddering halt ... and it had hardly started.

St. Patrick's Park, Westport was the venue and the combination of the West Mayo representative team was leading the Connacht champions and time was running out. Somehow, without playing anywhere near their capabilities, Crossmolina survived. For Joe Keane it was a valuable lesson.

"We should have lost that day and it brought it home to us just how important it was for us to be properly tuned in every day.

"We learned from it and we didn't make the same mistake again. That was a massive scare."

An accomplished soccer player, also with Crossmolina, he finds the movement that's required of a soccer player beneficial in gaelic football.

"They're two totally different games and they're wouldn't be an awful lot of similarity, but, in

soccer you'd have an awareness of space and movement.

"I suppose it helps from that point of view but there's very little else that you can take from soccer and use it to your benefit in gaelic football.

Joe feels that the team grinded out a lot of results during the year and that the togetherness gained from those games has stood to the team.

"In some games, particularly during the league, we were not playing particularly well but we grinded out results.

"Some people were saying that we were burned out and that we weren't the team that we were.

"But that worked in our favour and we used it positively as the season progressed."

Like his colleagues, Joe has the utmost of respect for Nemo but he's not getting carried away.

"Everyone is on about their pedigree and they're obviously a good side. They're very strong down the middle and they have a very slick forward line.

"They'd remind you a bit of

Ballina, the way their forward line works. We know that we'll have to be at our best if we are going to win but that's the way that the game goes.

"At this stage of a competition it's hardly going to get easy so of course it will be difficult but we're well fit to win this game."

According to Joe, the month long delay could yet work to Crossmolina's advantage.

"I think it will. We're sharper now than we were if it was played on St. Patrick's Day.

"The problem there was that the G.A.A. never called off the game and right up to the weekend before we didn't know what was going on.

"We all thought it was off and we had switched off but nothing was announced officially.

"So, it left us in a bit of no man's land and in the end we were delighted that it was postponed.

"We're pretty sharp now

and we're properly tuned in. Everything is what it should be and we can't wait for Monday."