

The Ciarán MacLochlainn Column -->

-->Out of this world

They did it because they thought they could. They believed they were the best. They rooted from their system the self-doubts that have frozen so many Mayo teams before in Croke Park. All of their work, their freshness, their intelligence, their adventurous spirit came into focus in an exhilarating second half. And this reporter, inured for so long to defeat, shed a tear of welcome for a rural team that has brought fresh and genuine hope to this old county.

I had braced myself for another hard-luck story, for the hackneyed acknowledgements from the winners about their tough and sporting opponents from the West, how 'they gave us a great game' . . . but were returning empty handed like so many of our representatives in the past decades.

Crossmolina have injected new faith into this hardened old hack. They have done what four teams from the county who reached the final had failed to do; they have created history, have set an example. Maybe at last the conviction that stunned Nemo Rangers will rub off onto their colleagues on the county team in their bid for similar success.

Every one of the team was a hero. Inspired by the gifted Kieran McDonald, who at last got the opportunity to display his special gifts to the football world, each of the fifteen delighted us with a second half out of this world.

Congratulations Crossmolina. We owe you a deep debt of gratitude. The West is Awake.