

The great Ciaran immortalised in Time of Our Lives

By JEROME O'CONNELL

CIARAN Carey is immortalised in a new book, which recalls the role of the Limerick hurlers in one of the greatest sporting stories of the last decade.

The Time of Our Lives is the second book by Joe O'Muirheartaigh which takes the reader on an emotive journey through the magical years of the 1990s in county Clare.

"I am indebted to the people of Clare—the players and the supporters who combined to give everyone in the county the time of their lives during those halcyon years that stirred souls. They made Time of Our Lives possible, as did the player and supporters from past generations, some of whom belong to the dead generations, who played and supported through thick and thin in the hope that Clare might finally have its day and days in the sun. Hard labours of time past made worthwhile when Clare's vintage crop was harvested in the 90s".

The 1993 clash of Limerick and Clare is described as the new beginning for the banner. The 1994 and 1995 Munster finals and Ciaran Carey's point a year later are also prominent recollections.

"League champions and Munster finalists in 1992, 1993 was going to be their year. This was how Limerick folk felt, even if there was some caution in the camp—13 points down and Limerick were hurl-

ing a nightmare. They battled back—reduced the gap to three, but there was no way back. Clare had a hurling team again."

One year later Bernie Hartigan gets credit for calling the result correctly.

"Of course we will do it, there is no need to ask. Clare always flop in finals. There is the usual hype emanating from Clare about this latest clash between the counties. Their record against us is dismal, and I see no reason why it will not be extended after Sunday. There is so much in our favour that it is difficult to visualise Clare keeping in touch for 70 minutes."

Ciaran Carey had words of solace.

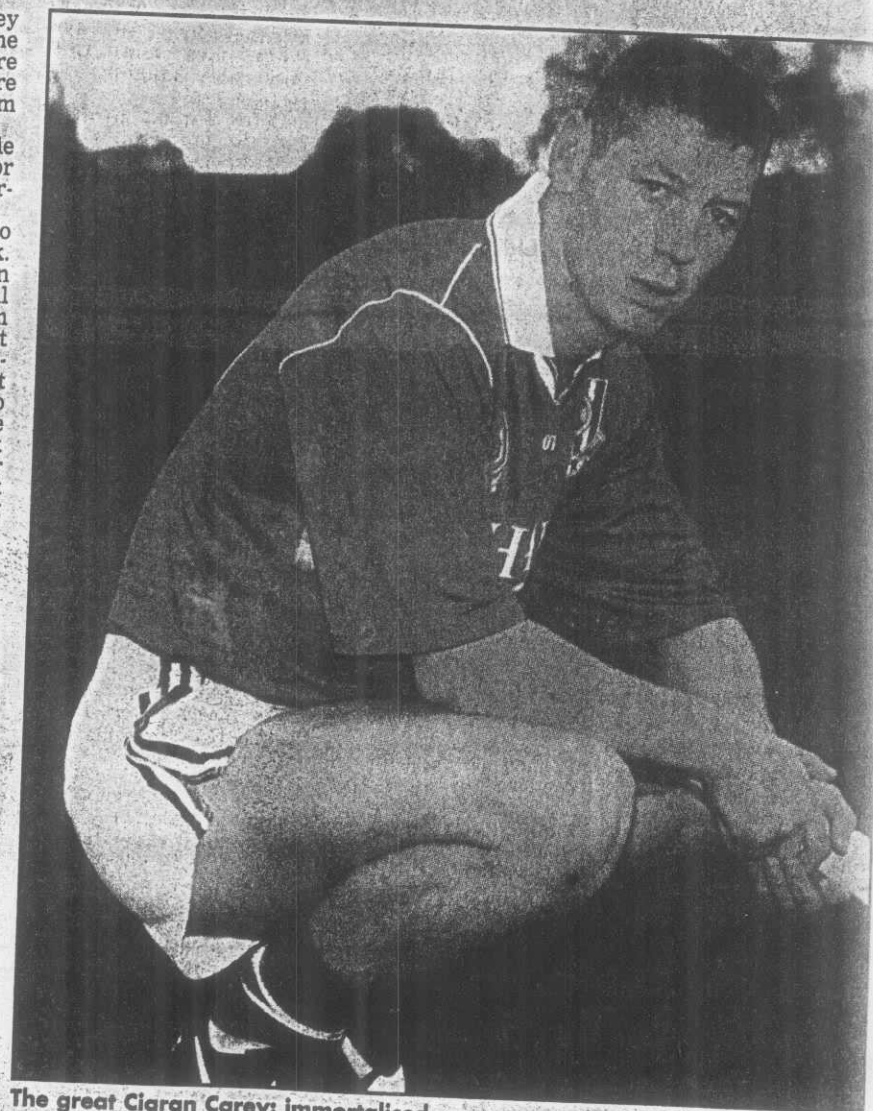
"It is terribly sad for Clare and I truly feel sorry for them. We know exactly how they feel. We have been in that position ourselves."

One year and another Munster final, with the Offaly six-minute All-Ireland Final victory still casting a dark shadow over Limerick.

"This was going to be Davie's day, Clare's day. Before the penalty he felled Damien Quigley on the double. In the second half, Quigley got another chance but kicked into the side netting. After that it was definitely going to be Davie's day, Clare's day."

The following year Limerick dethroned the reigning All-Ireland champions. Such was the mammoth performance of Ciaran Carey that an entire chapter, The Great Ciaran Carey, is required to celebrate his contribution.

"The greatest single event of the year was Ciaran Carey's incredible solo run in the dying



The great Ciaran Carey: immortalised

moments of the Munster semi-final against Clare. Every player has practised the same run in the field behind their homes as they grew up. It was Roy of the Rovers stuff, we all imagined doing it, yet very few of us were ever good enough to

accomplish it. It was an incredible individual achievement. At the beginning I put down to luck but no man could be this lucky, he's a giant of hurling," according to Galway's Peter Finnerty, writing in a Sunday newspaper.

For followers of sport, the memories will come flooding back while for collectors of statistics the complete listing of all Clare teams to reach finals of prominence, in senior, intermediate, junior and minor levels the book is essential.