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Bernard Brogan on twice losing his confidence and how he bounced back

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BROUGHT TO YOU BY **PADDYPOWER.**

"There was a spell from 2009 to 2015 where it's you and the Gooch."

In modern-day GAA, compliments don't get much higher than that. They definitely don't. Such were the levels that Bernard Brogan reached.

The four-time All Star joined Colm Parkinson for a special episode of *The GAA Hour* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W96mCfRXkM4>), a week after announcing his inter-county retirement, and looked back on his 14 seasons in the Dublin set-up.

"There's no way you could have imagined," said Parkinson, "when you were in your third year of being a sub for 'Pillar' (Caffrey), that you were going to be Player of the Year (in 2010) having not got into an All-Ireland final, with Dublin, and were going to win seven All-Irelands."

"Definitely not," Brogan agreed, "and you only realise all that when you look back."

Brogan retired from Dublin with a mighty impressive playing CV behind him and even if he only had fleeting match involvements in the five-in-a-row achievements, he showed steely resolve to come back from a bad injury to push the likes of Con O'Callaghan and Paul Mannion all the way for a starting jersey.



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During his wide-ranging chat with Parkinson, the 35-year-old touched on some of the tough periods of his inter-county career and what helped him pull through.

Having won the Footballer of the Year award in 2010, it was less than two years later that Bernard Brogan was putting himself through the wringer. He missed a one-on-one against Mayo goalkeeper David Clarke in a 2012 semi-final that Dublin would go on to lose by three points.

"I kept running that scenario through my head," says Brogan. "I didn't think I was in the moment for it. I didn't execute the skill the way I would have liked to do it."

Q **SPORTS JOE** pose I would have put a lot of pressure on myself. Coming from Player of the Year then we had just won our first All-Ireland [as a squad] and there was a momentum, and I felt I let the team down.

A "There was a chance, yeah, and I got what I wanted. I always felt that I could make a difference and Dave Clarke, who I was in Maynooth with and did a lot of work with. He knew my game well but... I wanted to strike it well, as I had against Laois, but the ball was low and it just caught the hand."

"I just stuck with me for some reason. I was like, 'Why didn't I bounce it and go past him?' I was through one-on-one. I had beaten Ger Caffrey, caught the ball over the top and I had four or five yards in front of me. There's all sorts running through your head but that one stuck with me."



David Clarke saves Bernard Brogan's shot on goal in the 2012 All-Ireland semi final. (Credit: Stephen McCarthy/SPORTSFILE)

Brogan and Dublin responded from that last four exit, in 2012, by sweeping to their second All-Ireland triumph [as a collective] in 2013. Brogan scored 2-3 in the final against Mayo to right that wrong from the previous year.

There would be more heartache in 2014 and, again, Brogan was ruing a miss, or two.

"I did a lot of work on that [free-taking] side of my game... In 2010, every shot I had inside the '45, genuinely I felt, 'This is going over the bar'. Left side or right side.

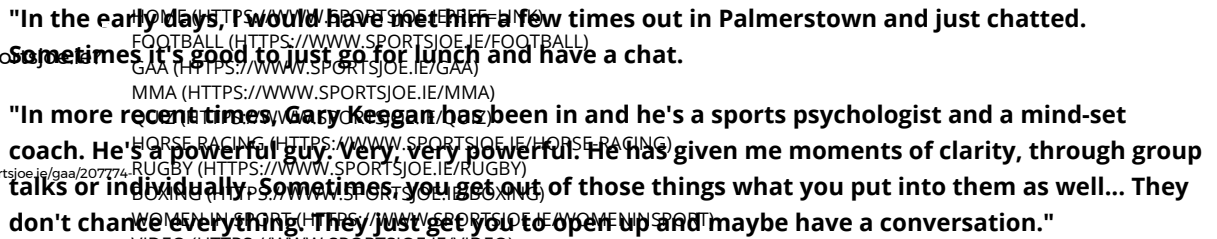
"[In 2014] I missed the first free and the second one was this difficult kick on the left side, nearly out around 40 yards. And I said, 'I'm not sure if I'm going to get this'. You've no chance when you're self-talk is giving you that back.

"Kevin McManamon talks a lot about self-talk and he uses it himself. It was just that Donegal set-up and how every score counts and there's pressure on every score."



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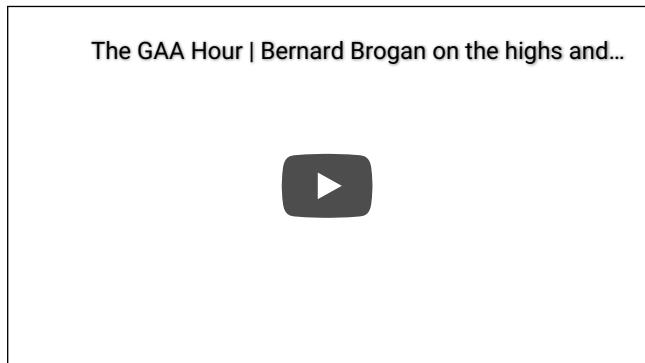
Dublin went on to lose that 2014 semi final to Donegal by six points as the champions missed a rake a chances, from frees and open play, in the final stages. Around that time, having come in as a performance coach in 2012, Bernard Dunne was having a positive impact in Dublin set-up. Brogan credits the former boxing world champion and others from the Dubs' backroom staff with helping him through that tough period.



Again, though, it was that hurt that helped drive him on.

With his sons, Keadán and Donagh, in his sports and in his personal life, he is back, Hogan finished up as close to a high as you can be possibly afforded in GAA. CONTACT US ([HTTPS://WWW.SPORTSJOE.IE/CONTACT](https://www.sportsjoe.ie/contact))

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Barry Murphy and Andrew Trimble are joined in the House of Rugby studio by Jerry Flannery to look back on a gripping World Cup final between England and the victorious South Africans. Felix Jones' involvement with the Springboks, and his next move, comes up too.



South Africa rule the world and Ireland has a World Cup-winning coach




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