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Limerick woman Niamh gets the road from TV3's The Apprentice

Nick Rabbitts

LIMERICK will not have its second Apprentice winner this year after Feohanagh businesswoman Niamh Humphreys was fired from the hit tv show this week.

Viewers of the TV3 programme - which aired on Monday night - saw Niamh placed as a member of Team Fusion, on a task to design a billboard for Lucozade Lite.

But after her team lost the task, the 35-year-old mother of one, who was raised in Lisnagry, was hauled back into the boardroom. And after narrowly avoiding the sack in the first week of the business contest, it was a case of second-time-unlucky for the former telecommunications salesperson. She was fired by Bill Cullen, who criticised her for working "way below par."

"It's all about doing more than what you are asked to do. People stay in their jobs because of what they do after they do what

they are paid to do," Dr Cullen told Niamh.

The UL graduate left the show in tears, and has admitted she cried for several days after her firing. She felt she fell victim to a clique of other contestants, of which she was not a part.

Speaking during the infamous taxi-ride home from Dr Cullen's headquarters at the Europa Academy in Swords, Co Dublin, a tearful Niamh said: "Of course I'm upset. It's a bit early in the competition for me to go home. But it was clear even since the task began that if we lost, the boys [on my team] would not have been brought to the boardroom."

"If that's the kind of tactics they want to play, well let them off. I can go out with my head held high. But I was definitely shafted."

Speaking earlier in the show, Niamh - who is currently looking for a job - said: "I don't do bitchy, I think it's a waste of energy. People who use dirty tactics are only harming themselves. You can be tough without being bitchy. That's just wasting energy, and I want to save that for getting to the final."

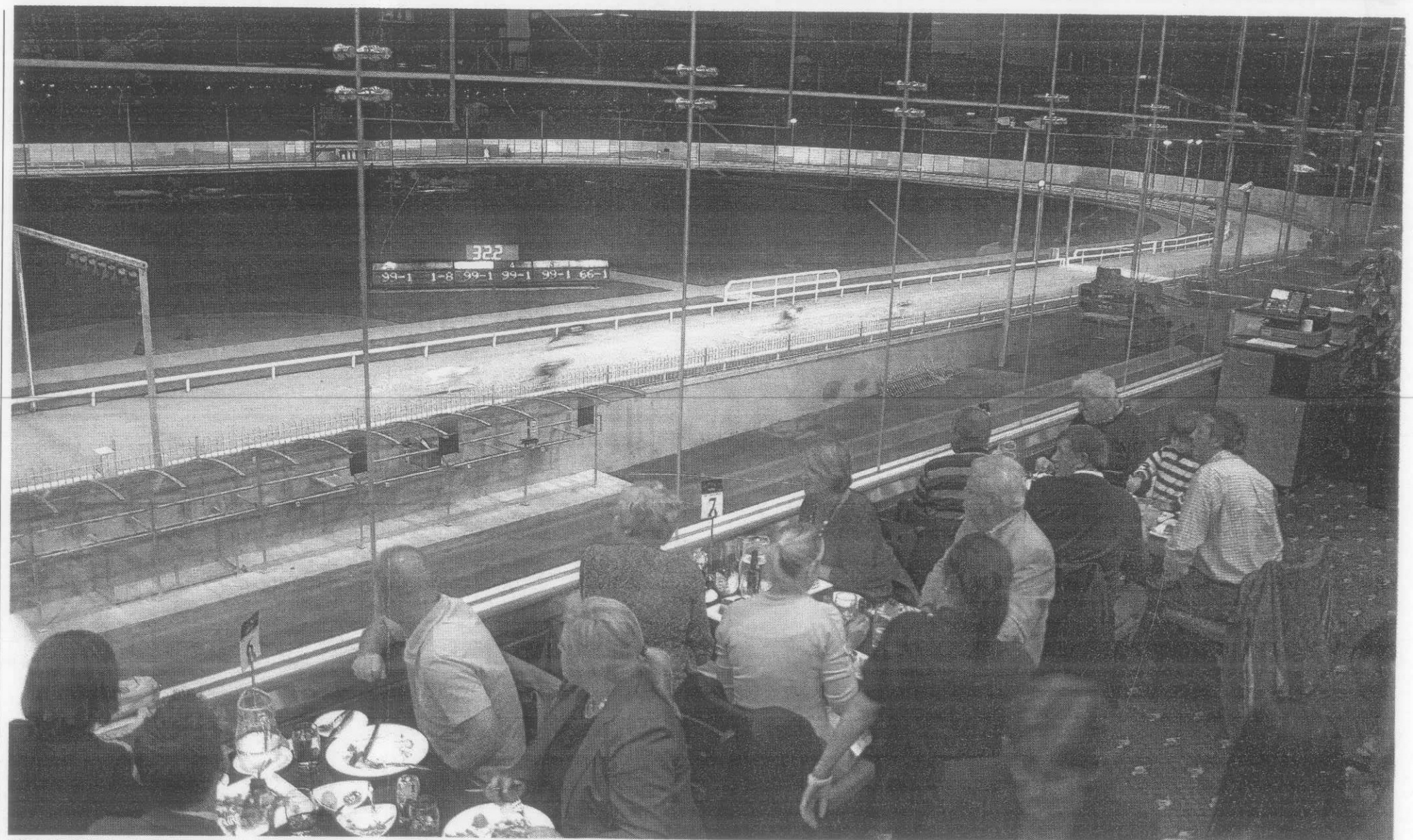
Niamh has failed to follow in the footsteps of the first Irish Apprentice winner, Brenda Shanahan. The former bridal shop owner from Kilmallock won the show back in 2008, and has been working for Dr Cullen ever since.

Limerick fashion queen Celia Holman-Lee ran the rule over Niamh's exit from The Apprentice during the 'You're Fired' show, which took place following the main show on TV3, hosted by Anton Savage.

The Apprentice continues next Monday on TV3 at 9pm.



Niamh Humphreys: felt she was victimised by a clique



Diners in the St Leger Restaurant at the new greyhound track in Greenpark off the Dock Road in Limerick watch the action at a dress rehearsal for the opening night this week

PICTURE: MICHAEL COWHEY

Limerick ready to go to the dogs!

Irish International Rules team to be special guests at opening night of €20m stadium off Dock Road

Kevin Corbett

LIMERICK'S new greyhound stadium opens its doors to the public for the first time this Friday night and special guests the Irish International Rules team will join the anticipated huge crowd at Greenpark for the occasion.

The latest addition to Limerick's enviable sports infrastructure, which cost €20m to complete, can take 2,900 spectators, but anyone hoping to be among the 190 people seated in the

track's restaurant are too late - it was booked out long ago.

General manager Declan O'Halloran hailed the track as "not just an investment for 2010, but an investment for the next 25-30 years for greyhound racing in the region".

"We think this is going to be a great new addition to Limerick, a new attraction along with Thomond Park, along with the racecourse, along with the GAA and it's another facility the Mid-West region can be proud of," said the Ennis Road man.

"Next year Limerick is the European City of Sport, so I think we're coming in at the perfect time to be complementary to all those facilities and it's something Limerick needs, the place needs every lift it can get."

"It is tough times now, there is no point saying otherwise. We think we will provide a little bit of razzmatazz when there mightn't be a lot going around."

The track has bars on the ground and mezzanine level, with table service in the restaurant and corporate entertain-

ment areas, and there is also a stage and dance floor. On Friday, there will be pre-race entertainment with Frankly Sinatra and post race from Red Effect.

With the ring road and tunnel completed the track enjoys excellent access from all sides now and for those coming from town there will be a shuttle bus service if they wish to leave the car at home.

"We'll start shuttles from Brown Thomas and Markets Field at around 6.30 and they'll be going back in from the track

from around 10.30," said Mr O'Halloran. "Doors are 6.30, first race 7.45, before Shelbourne Park because we're going to run a 12 race card and we don't want to be here all night, so we'll finish at 10.30. Then there's the option to stay on for the live music and entertainment, or to go back into town."

Racing manager Liam Kennedy told the Limerick Leader that some of the top trainers in the country had been down trialling their dogs and had expressed their delight with

the surface. In a nice touch, the dog who won the last race at the Markets Field, Mustang Johnny, is running on the first card this Friday night. Victory would make for a unique double.

"It's nice to see [leading trainers] Paul Hennessy, Owen McKenna and all those top boys down for trials. With the Leger coming up (in December) I'll need them boys," said Mr Kennedy.

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