

£50,000 spent on stand, terracing and lighting

LIMERICK UNVEIL FIRST PHASE

By JOHN O'SHAUGHNESSY

THE FIRST phase of Limerick City's £1m development plan at Rathbane will be unveiled this Sunday — and thanks to the club's fund raising scheme the cost of £50,000 has already been met.

From this weekend fans will have the option of covered accommodation, thanks to an imposing new structure behind the city goalmouth.

The covered terrace, running the full width of the pitch, will be officially opened for the visit of Cork City in a crunch League game and it is envisaged that by the time Bohemians come to Rathbane for the next home League match on November 24, that there will be at least ten tiers of steps for the added comfort of patrons.

Mr. Hayman Harris, the man responsible for raising

the money to help develop the former Old Crescent Rugby Grounds, told me that it was their intention to keep contractor Pat Whelan, the former Irish rugby international, on the site.

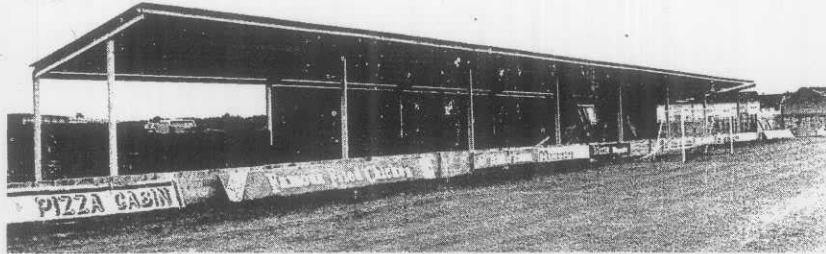
"Now that the first phase is almost over we aim to go ahead with our other plans and these include seated stands running the full length of the ground on each side", said Mr. Harris.

The initial £50,000 was gobbled up by the goal-mouth stand, banking for spectators on both sides of the pitch, plus a new lighting system for training.

Drainage work has also been carried out.

Achieved

Back to Mr. Harris: "The work achieved to date is proof enough of our



Work in progress on the new stand at Rathbane earlier this week. Inside the next fortnight it is planned to have several tiers of steps in the stand. Other work such as drainage, lighting and the provision of embankments has been carried out in recent weeks at a cost of £50,000.

intentions. I agree there were many who were sceptical when we first launched our plans, but I think at this stage we have won the public to our side".

When it was put to him that a floodlighting system had been promised, he replied: "We carried out some research into what our

priorities should be and the feedback was that our supporters put covered accommodation at the top of the list. We have been quoted figures from £70,000 to £80,000 for a set of floodlights and these will come in time".

Their weekly lottery, he said, was their lifeline and

was primarily responsible for the progress made. Mr. Harris revealed that they had 10,000 subscribers with a waiting list of up to 500 more.

The attraction, he continued, was that all the prizemoney was kept at home as the lottery was confined to the Limerick

area. In the 30 weeks of its operation it had generated a substantial amount of money for the club "enough to pay our bills to the present day with a substantial sum set aside for other development work".

Since Limerick's average home attendance is around 1,500 the new amenity

means that all can be covered in the event of inclement weather.

Further

With further ground improvements plus an acceptable level of performance by the team, there is no reason why City should not attract home crowds of around 7,000, as was the case when they won the League in 1980.

The board of directors are anxious to create a family type atmosphere at Rathbane and later they will provide facilities for children.

The dressingroom complex is one of the finest in the League and comprises of a board room, snooker facilities, lounge bar, etc.

Mr. Harris paid tribute to Pat and Anne Grace for their patience and foresight.

"When we first moved to Rathbane we were treated as a joke — now the public has come to realise we are

serious and at our present rate of progress will have realised most of our dreams by 1990".

It has been observed that attendances are on the increase and this is another source of encouragement to the club.

Sunday

While the board are getting on with their work behind the scenes, Joe O'Mahony is endeavouring to put a successful formula together on the field.

This Sunday they will be attempting to get back into winning groove at the expense of Cork City who on their last visit to headquarters, returned home with a 1-0 win.

Memories of that exciting 3-1 win over Shamrock Rovers are still fresh in the memory, and though since beaten 2-1 by Dundalk, the locals are assured of big support this time.



Hayman Harris.

Cork are an unpredictable type of team, just as Limerick can be on occasion.

With two away games coming up on the trot it is important for Limerick that they should win this one. Already two points in arrears of joint leaders Dundalk and Galway United after two series of games, they cannot afford any further slips at this early stage of the season.

Good news for the manager is that Johnny Walsh is back in action with the B string and scored a good goal against Cork Corinthians last weekend. It cannot be too long until he works his way back into contention for a place on the Premier League side. Kick off is 2.45.

Newcastle United, away to Monaghan Town on Sunday, have signed Sligo Rovers former player manager, Paul Fielding, as a player and he will line out for them this weekend.

RUGBY:

Leagues near final stages

(By FULL-BACK)

THE RACE for final places in the various leagues is now hotting up with a number of clubs involved in more than one competition. Success in the different grades can cause a strain on a club's playing panel being on occasions, involved in the final stages of more than one league.

With the season just two months on perhaps this would be a good time to have a look at the performance of the nine local clubs to date. Also we will attempt to predict the finalists of the leagues at present in progress.

BOHEMIANS

field — they have yet to win a game — the purchase of their new ground at Rathward was a brave undertaking.

When laid out the club will have two playing pitches and a training area which should prove very fruitful in the near future.

RICHMOND

While the side is composed

their pitch at Corbally to see the fruits of their labour.

The structure is there to make St. Mary's one of the top clubs in Munster if the players are prepared to play their part.

SHANNON

With the Senior team enjoying an unbeaten run the 2nds have been blowing hot and cold. A win over Garryowen was sandwiched between defeats by Waterpark and St. Mary's. Their main problem is a lack of consistency though this young side is capable of much better.

One plus to the side is the place kicking ability of Declan O'Connor, one of the best in local rugby. While they may not win any of the Junior trophies on offer this season



Committee and guests pictured at the Limerick Golf Club Lady Captain's dinner. Standing, from left: Helen Ryan, Dorothy Whisker, Olive O'Kelly, Maureen McMahon, Claire Hayes, Claire Fitzgerald and Finola Graydon. Seated, from left, Hilda Mulvihill, Marian Collins, Elizabeth Barry, Lady Captain; Maisie Cooper and Vera Sinnott.

Elizabeth provides

Tough test for hurlers v. Clare in League

By JOHN O'SHAUGHNESSY

WHEN THE Limerick and Clare senior hurling selectors met this week to pick their respective sides for Sunday's crunch League clash at the Gaelic Grounds, they obviously concentrated on a team-building programme with a view to the '86 provincial championship campaign, in which they are due to clash in Ennis, in the opening round.



of redressing the imbalance. Since both teams are on the same points mark, they have similar reasons for wanting to come out on top in the latest confrontation.

It is very difficult to reach a conclusion on the possible outcome. This is the time of the season when anything can happen, and since the game being used for purposes of finding the best talent available to both sets of selectors is very much a guessing game as to how the pendulum will