

Leader2

Saturday June 9 2012

Pageant picks Aoife and Lydia are heading to the Miss Ireland Universe competition >>>P20



Those lazy days of summer
Patricia Feehily says that too many sports camps and activities are ruining the summer holidays >>>P3



Real big on the pig
Maureen Sparling on why the play Pigtown is a hit with Limerick audiences >>>P2

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Driven Alice is aiming for Formula One

Alice Powell is a hot prospect in motor racing with strong Limerick connections. She has set her sights on the big time, says **Donal O'Regan**

NINETEEN-year-old Alice Powell, who has strong Limerick links, hopes to become the first successful female in Formula 1 history.

Alice has just started racing for Irish team Status GP in the GP3 Series. It supports Formula 1 races in Europe and are shown live on Sky Sports.

“I've relatives in Effin, Kilmallock, Mungret and Galbally. Granddad is from the city”

season and she has already caught the eye of many in the racing world with a storming

performance in Monaco. Alice learnt to drive a car at the age of six and started karting

at eight. Proving her talent, she won the same championship as Lewis Hamilton at a younger age than him.

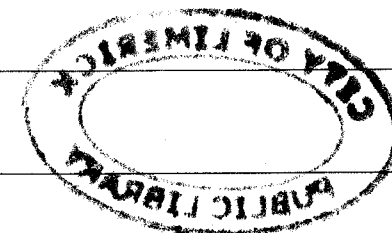
“In 2010 when I was 17 I beat all the guys that I was racing against in the UK Formula Renault British Racing Automobile Club championship.

“I was one of the

Continues on page 2



Thumbs up for Limerick: Alice Powell, far right, with mum Eileen and sisters Ellie and Grace on a visit to Barrington Street in the city to see her grandfather's Jim Fraser family home



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WHAT TO SEE
WHAT TO DOWhat's going on
around Limerick

Thursday

WILDEBEST Theatre Company's production of **TAN** returns to the Loft this week, opening Thursday.

Written and performed by Ann Blake and Marie Boylan and directed by Myles Breen, the play joins two Limerick girls as they get ready for a night on the town and is an energetic comedy that promises to entertain and educate.

See **TAN** in the Loft from June 7-10. Bookings 085-1462364.

Friday

SEMINAL Limerick play **Pigtown** - written by Mike Finn - returns to a Belltable stage for the first time in ten years this week.

The play, directed by Paul Brennan and featuring professional actor John Anthony Murphy in the lead role as Tommy Clocks, is the inaugural presentation of the Belltable's new community theatre project, and as such features an amateur cast assembled around Murphy. **Pigtown** runs until June 16. See www.belltable.ie for bookings. See Maureen Sparling's article below.



John Anthony Murphy as Tommy Clocks in **Pigtown**.

Picture: Adrian Butler

Saturday

THE latest Bar Boot Sale takes place in 31 Thomas Street/Dr John's this Saturday from 1pm - 5.30pm.

A car boot sale without the cars and instead boasting DJs and a bar. Records, clothes, DVDs, books and more on sale and admission is free.

Driving ambition to make it in F1

Continued from page 1

→ youngest out there. That was the same car that Lewis Hamilton raced when he was 18 and won his British Championship," said Alice.

Born in Chipping Norton in England, Alice became the first female to ever win a Formula Renault race not mind the overall title.

She sports Irish and British flags on her helmet due to her strong Limerick links.

"I'm half Irish. It's very important to me. My granddad, Jim Fraser, used to live in Barrington Street. He went to the Model and St Munchin's," said Alice. School.

Mr Fraser emigrated to England in the 1950's but the family kept their close links to their native county.

"My grandmother, Margaret Fraser, is buried in Crecora and I visit her grave whenever I come home. Michael Fraser, my granddad's brother,

lives in Mungret and his daughter Jane Fraser

is a jazz singer so I call to see them," said Alice.

She is trying to make history by becoming the first successful female driver and also has a deep interest in her family's history.

"I go to see my great grandmother, Theresa Fraser's grave in Effin near Kilmallock. My mum, Eileen Powell, was actually born in Malta and spent time in Limerick near Barrington Street," says Alice.

She recalls fondly visits to her aunt Lily Barrett (nee Wall) in Effin; Eleanor

"I like hockey so when I come to Ireland I like to watch hurling

and Margo Fraser in Kilmallock and the Frasers in Galbally, who are the undertakers.

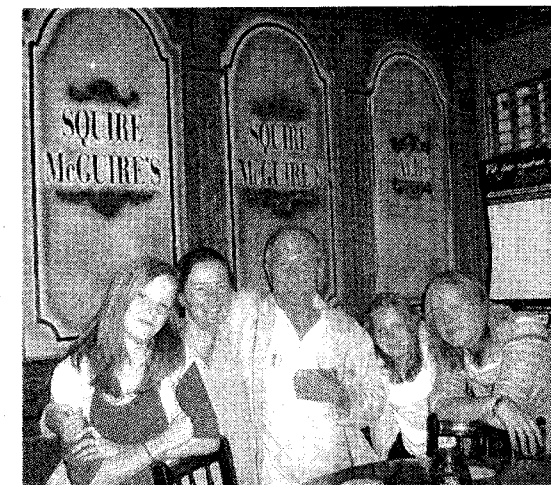
"They are all over the place. I was last in Limerick

two years ago but I'd like to visit again later this year," Alice.

On one trip she even took in a game of hurling.

"I like hockey so when I come to Ireland I like to watch hurling. When I went out two years ago I went to watch my aunt's son play for Effin. They played against Bruree.

"It is a lot more aggressive than hockey. It's a good sport. I really



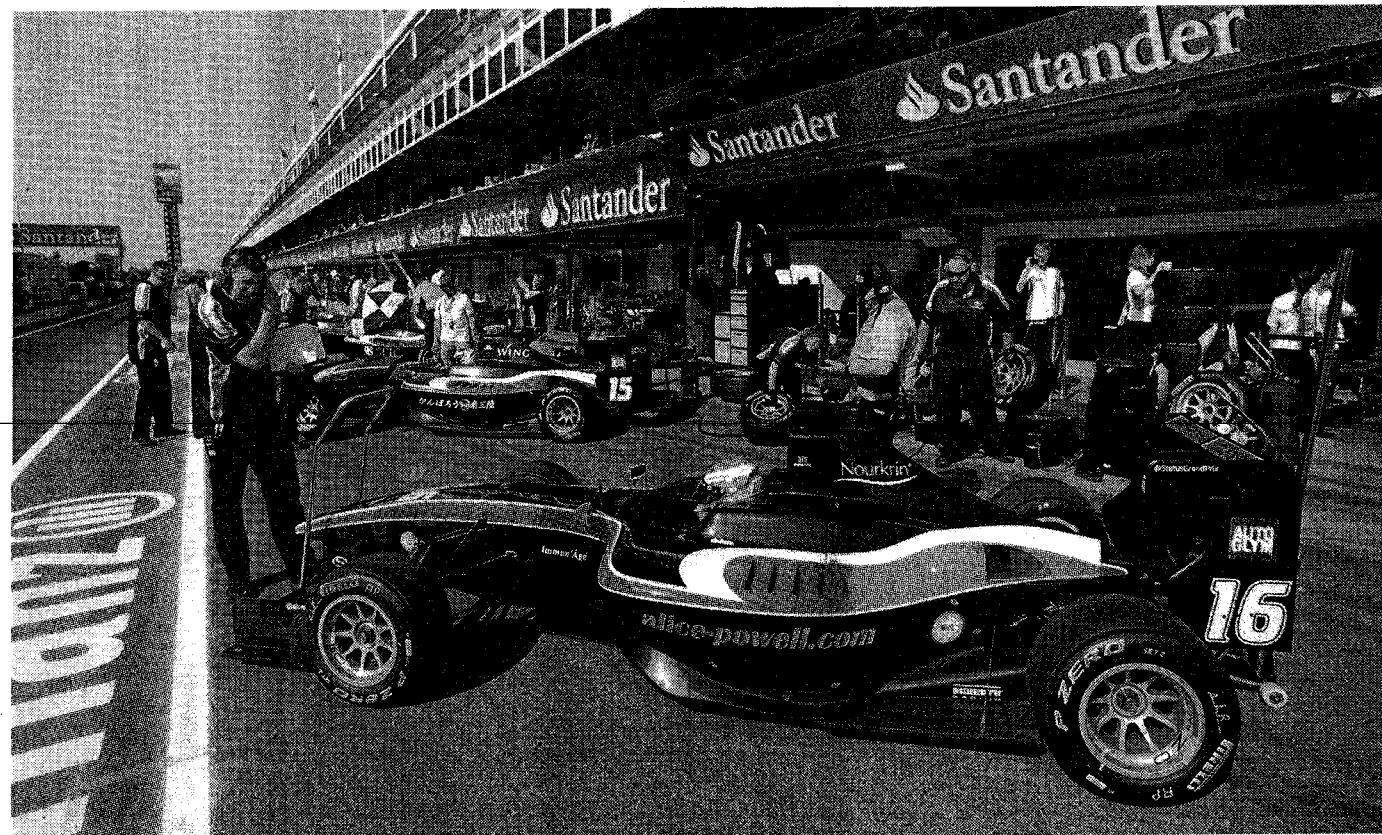
Alice at a family gathering in Squire McGuire's

like watching it. I don't think I'll play it though," laughs Alice.

A broken finger from a hurley wouldn't be ideal as she steers her 2 litre

280 bhp turbo powered Renault engine with a top speed of 250kph around tracks like Monaco and Valencia!

Aged just 19, Alice has



Alice Powell in her Status GP car gets ready to qualify at the Circuit de Catalunya in Barcelona in May

Picture: Daniel Kalisz

a long career ahead of her but she has her sights firmly set on Formula 1. GP3 is a training ground for young drivers hoping to reach Formula One.

"There has been five female drivers in Formula 1 but they haven't had much success - that's my aim. The UK economy has taken a bit of nose dive, it is really quite hard for females in motorsport to get sponsorship at the moment.

"It's not cheap, it's not like football or even hurling. You go buy a hurley and go out and play, it is a bit more expensive.

"I'm really lucky to be running with the Irish team Status GP which is run by David Kennedy," said Alice.

Everyone fancies themselves as a great driver but there are many factors that separate the men from the boys, or in Alice's case - the women from the girls. "You've got to have talent and you need to have the budget to go out testing. If you have got the best equipment and go out testing, it's really important. That's vital. When I went in to GP3 I had only two test days in the car. Everybody else has a year and a half of driving in the car or about 12 test days.

"So we went in to the first race in Barcelona not expecting much - may be top 20 but we managed to finish 11th which was really pleasing," said Alice. She is just back from Monaco where again she finished just outside the top 10 on the famous road circuit. Next stop is Valencia from June 22 to 24 and Alice will be in top gear to reach the podium and spray champagne.

And when she does there will be many in County Limerick toasting her success.

Play sings to the soul of Limerick

This Limerick Life