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Aoife's star turn on the Voice of Ireland

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in UL. "I know all of the rest of them are really popular, but my instinct was to go with her, if I want someone to hone in on my vocal abilities it should be Sharon Corr. "They didn't show it on television, but she gave me a little wink when she turned around, so she won me over with that, it was enough for me," laughed Aoife.

The Limerick lass only started singing in public a little over two years ago and admits she entered the show with low expectations, but is now looking

forward to the next stage, the battles.

"I watched it last year and two of my friends, independently of each other, sent me on the application forms and told me to apply. I filled out the form and didn't take it too seriously, I didn't imagine any of this would happen," she explained.

"It is really only hitting me now, I think Monday, that I actually did it, it felt a bit like a dream sequence.

"I will give it my all, I would absolutely love to get through. It is a 50-50 chance, so all I can do is do my best and leave it down to fate," she added.

week, some 28 staff have occupied the two Limerick premises, in Cruises Street, and at the Crescent Shopping Centre.

The high-profile sit-in took place after workers were told they would

to an end when the receiver Deloitte Ireland made a commitment in writing that all the wages would be paid by this Friday, January 25.

In a statement, staff at Cruises Street, thanked a number of parties

Robyn Long, Kildimo, who worked with HMV for four years, said the support from the public was "amazing". "Ordinary people had been ringing in from home telling us to keep up with what we

HMV Ireland are on temporary lay-off, and able to claim some benefits. They have been receiving support from the Limerick Resource Centre for the Unemployed.

Prior to a receiver

normal."

This was withdrawn when David Carson of Deloitte Ireland was appointed receiver to HMV here. Deloitte Ireland had no involvement in this letter.

Ted Walsh leads the tributes to racing legend Roger Hurley

Aine Fitzgerald

GRAND National winning horse trainer, Ted Walsh, has led the tributes to legendary point-to-point champion rider, Roger Hurley, who died suddenly at the age of 58.

The Bruff native was associated for much of his career with renowned Athlaccabased trainer PP Hogan and was champion in 1987 when he rode a then-record 35 winners.

He passed away at his home, Dooneen Stud, in Crecora.

The esteem in which Roger was held within the horse-racing industry and indeed the wider community was evident from the hundreds of mourners who paid their respects at his funeral in Bruff at the weekend.

"He was a linchpin in Pat Hogan's operations for 20 to 25 years and I rode a lot of the hunters' chasers for them in my

youth, Roger was only a young fella then," recalled Ted Walsh who paid tribute to Roger from the altar of Ss Peter and Paul's Church in Bruff on Sunday.

The RTE racing commentator who last met Roger prior to Christmas described him as "a real nice fella" who carried his success with great modesty.

"He was a great rider," Ted told the Leader this week.

"The way I would put it is- he was as good a man as ever threw a leg across a horse."

In 1987 Roger finished runner-up to John Queally in the amateur riders' championship with 17 racecourse winners.

Victories in his career included a big double for PP Hogan at the 1989 Punchestown Festival when he rode Howyanow to land the La Touche Cup and took the Championship Hunters' Chase on



The late Roger Hurley, who has been described this week as 'the great horseman of his time'

Ah Whisht. "He was a very, very modest chap - a little shy if you didn't know him," Ted recalled.

"Once he knew the company he was in, you couldn't be out with a nicer fella. He was a very intelligent fella - a good storyteller and great company.

"He just had a way about him - you would be all the better for knowing him."

Enda Bolger who also rode with Roger at the

Hogan yard remembers him as "a great friend" and "a brilliant rider".

"We had many discussions both on the track and off the track," Enda recalled.

"He was a very, very gentle guy, very private and just great to be around. He was a great horseman and he will be sadly missed," added the Bruree trainer.

Cllr Bill O'Donnell who competed against Roger for many years in point-to-points as a young jockey said he always looked up to Roger who he deemed to be "one of the legends of the game".

"Roger was an absolute gentleman. He was a proper horseman," said the Bruff-based councillor.

"He was the great horseman of his time in point-to-point. He was a kind fella and extremely popular. I want to extend my deepest sympathies to his twin brother Michael and all

his family." According to Cllr O'Donnell there could be no greater tribute to Roger than the huge number of people who travelled to his home town of Bruff to pay their respects - both at Butler's funeral home on Saturday night and again at the local church on Sunday.

Well-known figures from the racing world in attendance included John Queally, Martin Brassil, Tony Martin, Niki Dee, Liam Cusack, John Thomas McNamara, the Costello brothers and John Berry.

"There were racing people from all over Ireland - it was unbelievable how they turned out in force to be there," said Cllr O'Donnell.

"It was also fitting that Ted Walsh would give the tribute from the altar.

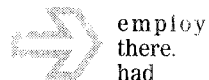
"They were contemporaries and they were good friends."



BlackTie founder shows Dragons Den to informed staff of the

BlackTie set to be

Continued from page



employs there.

had done a survey of us and seen that there was a drop in the vacancy rate in the city. It shows there is activity coming in, but this highlights that we are not out of the difficult times yet she said.

However, she said that if any jobs were to be lost, it is a better environment to be seeking work now than 12 months ago.

"We have had job announcements, with rumours of others. Not losing your job is not bad as it was 12 months ago. There are probably better prospects," she said.

Mr O'Farrell