

Yachtsman and rugby heroes are feted

By Mary Earls

TWO of Limerick's greatest sporting achievements of 2007 were officially recognised by Limerick County Council at a Civic Reception in County Hall.

Grand Slam champions Garryowen FC, and

Garryowen FC, they won an unprecedented Grand Slam, picking up the AIB League and Cup, as well as Munster Senior and Junior Cups.

Limerick based property developer Ger O'Rourke, last month became the first Irish overall winner of the

one of toughest offshore sailing races in the world.

Cathaoirleach of Limerick County Council, Cllr Kevin Sheahan said: "The council is delighted to hold a Civic Reception for Ger O'Rourke and Garryowen FC in recognition of their signifi-

ther enhance Limerick's proud sporting tradition and ability to compete at the top level nationally and internationally".

Commenting on the Mr O'Rourke's Fastnet win, Cllr Sheahan said: "Winning this tough event is, for sailors, like an Irish success in

the rugby or soccer World Cup. Ger's victory in the toughest of weather conditions resulted in a new page of sporting history being written. For the first time in the history of the Fastnet Yacht Race, which began in 1925, the name of an Irish boat is on that

famous British trophy.

Cllr Sheahan, meanwhile, paid tribute to Garryowen's contribution to local rugby and their part in profiling Limerick's proud sporting tradition at national level.

He said: "We are delighted to officially recognise Garryowen

FC's record achievement in being the first club to win the Munster Senior Cup, Munster Junior Cup AIB Cup and AIB League Division in a single season. The 2006/7 senior team included no fewer than 11 players from the club's Rugby Academy, which

is a testament to the club's role in developing the best in young talent. Garryowen's management, coaching staff, players and supporters are a credit to their club and continue to be wonderful ambassadors for Limerick," concluded Cllr Sheahan.



Cathaoirleach Kevin Sheahan, crew members, Thomas Whelan, and Edwin O'Connor with Ger, Sean and Deirdre O'Rourke at the Civic Reception in County Hall this week.

Fastnet Race winner Ger O'Rourke, received the highest accolade that the local authority can award to an individual, group or organisation.

In a spectacular 2006/7 season for

608-mile Rolex Fastnet Yacht Race.

The Western Yacht Club member and his crew were awarded the Fastnet Challenge Cup and a Rolex Yachtmaster timepiece following their win in

cant and momentous achievements. Limerick and its sports men and women are known the world over and have been a source of pride for the County for many years. "Their successes fur-

Garryowen FC climbing their way to victory on the way to a Grand Slam.



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