

mount to that.

The pack's huge display, both in defence and attack, was highlighted by the three tries scored by forwards with O'Connell, Flannery and Wallace all crossing the Sale try line.

Yes, I was wrong in suggesting a low scoring affair but at the chance of taking the win that was last week, I'll gladly bow my head and admit defeat on that one. I'll also admit defeat on backing Flannery at 22/1 for the first try and not taking the offer of some speculative bookies that had O'Connell at 33/1.

Nonetheless, we move to the old adage of who's taking the horse to France? Answer quite simple is, we are. And the proud and Munster brave are in pole position to take on the win up front and possible bully another French side into submission.

Why? Because they can. Rugby is not as simple as that and don't think for one minute that I'm suggesting that.

The Munster steam train is in full flight and the chink in the door was kicked open following a number of results going the province's way.

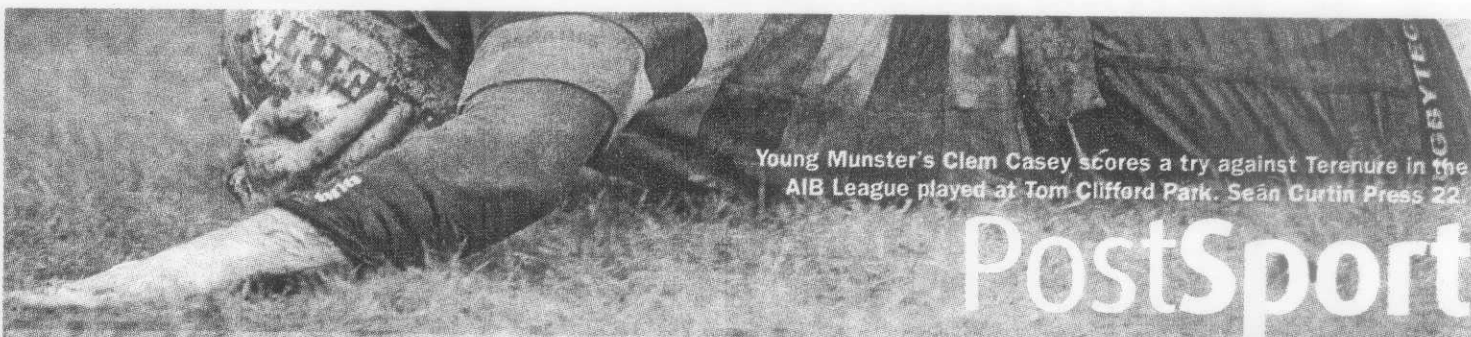
Try scorer last weekend and Ireland Munster hooker, Jerry Flannery, knows that there was a lot involved in getting the train moving again.

"Last weekend was about getting some pride back into playing in Thomond Park. It's the first step and we have another pool game this weekend and if we can go to France and get a result we'll be well on our way to doing that.

Embarrassment was one word used by the players when looking back at the Ulster game, but from that a catalyst was born. The injection came and the result followed.

Ambition was another word used by the players, Flannery included and he is one of many of the Munster squad that is still, two Heineken cups aside, very ambitious.

Munster to win in Montauban, I'll take that and this time I'll take it by the narrowest of margins.

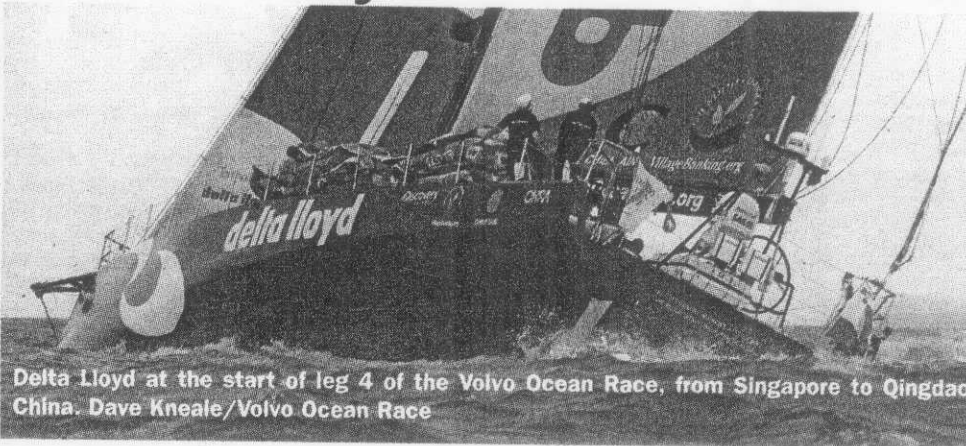


Young Munster's Clem Casey scores a try against Terenure in the AIB League played at Tom Clifford Park. Seán Curtin Press 22.

# PostSport

In division one, this weekend's fixtures sees, Galweglans host Shannon at Crowley Park, Blackrock College RFC play Young Munster at Stradbrook, Terenure College host Garryowen at the Lakelands, while U.L. Bohemian face off against Clontarf at Annacotty. In division two, there's a local derby on where Bruff entertain Old Crescent at Killballyowen Park, while Thomond host Instonlans at Liam Fitzgerald Park. All matches are scheduled to kick off at 14.30 on this Saturday.

## Delta Lloyd China bound



Delta Lloyd at the start of leg 4 of the Volvo Ocean Race, from Singapore to Qingdao, China. Dave Kneale/Volvo Ocean Race

THE fourth leg of the Volvo Ocean Race in which Ireland and Limerick have some very strong links in Team Delta Lloyd magnate, Ger O'Rourke and crewman and ships engineer, Edwin O'Connor, brings the seven remaining yachts, again, into territory unknown as they make their way from Singapore to Qingdao in China.

The crews have already taken a battering in the early part of this race and it is set to continue as the race takes on new levels of intensity and sailing at the extreme.

These boats are built for entirely different conditions but such is the course that the race committee have plotted.

The extreme conditions that these sailors and more importantly the boats, find themselves in would

have adverse effects on the structure of the boats.

To explain it a little easier, these boats are designed to sail where the wind would come over your shoulder hitting the side of your face and indeed the side of the sail, if you were facing towards the bow. Think of it as you would ideally like the wind to come from anything between 3, 4 and 5 o'clock if 12 noon is the bow of the boat straight in front of you.

The idea is that wind coming from this directing would give the boat the maximum amount of speed as it cut through the water.

The hulls, mast and structural rigging would be set up like that on these mammoth boats to harness this power and translate it into speeds of anything between 20, 30 and 40 knots. Optimum speed can be faster than a hi powered speedboat and if you are

familiar with sailing at that speed, it's pretty fast. These boats don't have brakes don't forget.

Anyway, the leg that the seven boats face into on the way to Qingdao will have the wind hitting the boats and sailors at 12 o'clock - the worst possible condition for both comfort and speed.

The sea state will be considerably worse than lumpy, where 10 metre swells would not be uncommon and are quite likely to be surpassed.

This will be a tough one and only the toughest strongest boats will last the course.

Hence the boats would be designed and built to skim the water as opposed to pound through it like a lump hammer.

The early stages has produced constant speeds but those are somewhat similar throughout the fleet and hence the bunching of the fleet where small margins separate the lead boat from the rear of the fleet.

The two Irish boats are jostling with the Spanish boat, Telefonica Black and one of the Swedish entries, Ericsson 3.

Delta Lloyd hit fourth position at one stage during the week where only two miles separated the leaders and Ger O'Rourke's first generation entry.

The yachts will continue their passage to the scoring gate at the South Rock Light which lies north of Borneo before continuing their route to Taiwan where a decision of going inside or outside the island faces all the crews.

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