

News

News in brief

Limerick band Animal Beats to perform outside HMV

CRUISES STREET

LIMERICK city will be rocking this Saturday afternoon, no matter what the score is in the big rugby match at Thomond Park. HMV has invited Animal Beats to its Limerick store on Cruises Street to play at 2pm.

The young Limerick musicians will perform tracks from their new album, *Pesky Kids*, the IYMAS Volume 2 Monaghan, outside the store day after release. The double CD follows the second Irish Youth Music Awards (IYMAS) in April 2009 which saw the debut album *Monaghan* prevailing in the award stakes. The follow-up CD is part of a nationwide initiative founded upon the premise of the IYMAS to encourage young musicians to act in a responsible and mature manner to further their own collective goals.

HMV Limerick Manager Rosey Clifford said: "We're really looking forward to welcoming Animal Beats to HMV Limerick, Cruises Street for a busking style live performance outside the store. We are delighted to be involved in such a great cause and would encourage music fans to pop down on Saturday to lend their support to this worthwhile initiative."

New pocket guide

LIMERICK CITY

A NEW pocket sized promotional guide to the city has been launched with the aim of providing information to tourists seeking some of the city's hot spots.

Limerick Co-Ordination Office has commissioned and printed 50,000 "Experience Limerick" cards which were jointly funded by Shannon Development and Limerick City Council.

Limerick public transport to get real time info by 2011

PASSENGER INFORMATION

FIANNA Fail and the Green Party have agreed to roll out Real Time Passenger Information for public transport users in Limerick. As part of the revised Programme for Government the coalition partners have decided that the initiative, which will be introduced in Dublin and Cork next year, will be extended to Limerick in 2011. The information, which will be displayed at bus stops across the city, will relay delays in bus services. The data will also be available via text message and on the internet.

Arts groups got €7,200

GRANTS

LIMERICK city council has donated €7,200 in grants under the Arts Act 15 local artists and arts organisations. Members of the cultural and sporting SPC passed the motion at Monday's meeting.

Sean needs a hand rowing into history

Donal O'Regan

A LIMERICKMAN is setting off on the adventure of a lifetime and he wants all schools in the county to give him a hand. Sean McGowan, from Farranshone, aims to be the first Irishman to cross the Atlantic ocean solo.

He is aiming to raise one million rand or €80,000 for the Limerick set up charity Soweto Connection, which helps women with AIDS in South Africa. Mr McGowan says the epic journey will take him around 100 days to complete but he has been planning it for years.

"The madness set in about in six years ago," he laughs. "I heard about Eamon and Peter Kavanagh rowing the Atlantic and from the time I heard it I was captivated - just the enormity of it. I thought it was incredible and I could never get rid of it from my mind."

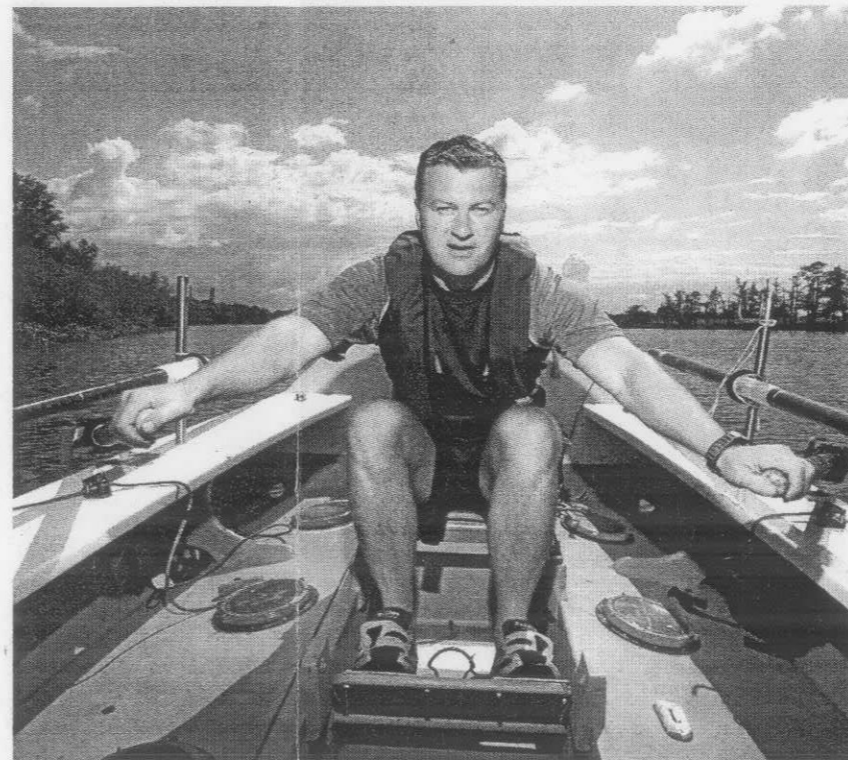
The 41 year-old, who began rowing when he was 13, begins the race on December 6 in the Canaries and will finish in Antigua.

He is going solo and unsupported which means he has to bring all his own food and get his water from a desalination unit.

"I did a lot of research and I bought a boat a year and half ago. I've been planning and training and working hard since then on mental and physical training," said Mr McGowan.

His boat is called Tess and she will be literally the only one keeping him going for the trip.

"It's a 24 foot rowing boat with two cabins, one



Sean McGowan is hoping to become the first Irishman to row solo across the Atlantic

PICTURE: PRESS 22

in the bow and one in the stern and I'll sleep in the one in the stern. There are four other skulls and 15 doubles in the race but it's like sending 20 people walking around Europe. After the first night you won't see them again," he explained.

Mr McGowan is married with four children who are equally apprehensive and proud of their dad.

"Everything is a risk. If you walk across the road and don't look you're putting yourself at risk so you try to minimise the risk and that's what I've done with the boat. I have as much safety equipment as possible - beacons, lifeboats etc.

"They're going to miss

me and be a bit worried but they're very supportive," he said.

His family will be eagerly following his progress on-line as will school children. Knockea National School are the first school to sign up to the Shout Out for Sean appeal.

"We have a brochure school pack which Carambola are producing. It explains the challenge and they can send me messages of support and then I can email them back on board and thank them," he said.

Children can complete specially designed curriculum sheets as well as raising some money for the Soweto Connection.

And he will need all the support he can get.

"I have my schedule made out. I start at midnight when I go to bed. I get five hours sleep then I get up at 5 in the morning. I have half an hour for breakfast and getting the boat ready. Then I do an hour on and half an hour off. I keep rowing like that until 1pm.

"Then I swap and do half an hour on and hour off due to the heat. As I get into the evening time I go back to my morning schedule. I'm basically rowing all day apart from five hours sleep," he explains.

For more information log onto www.atlantic09.com or www.sowetoconnection.org

Temporary releases take the pressure off

TEMPORARY release is being used to alleviate pressure on Limerick's overcrowded prison, the Irish Prison Service has said in response to criticisms last week by District Court judge Tom O'Donnell.

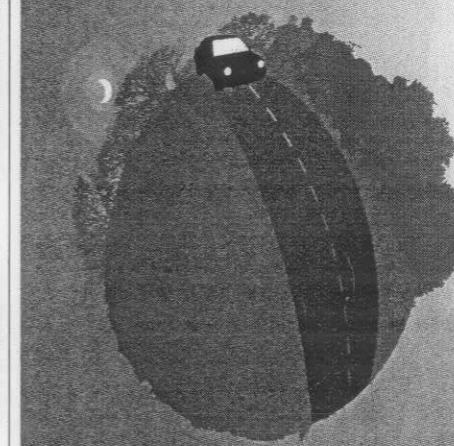
Judge O'Donnell asked if there was any point in him

imposing lengthy terms of imprisonment if people were being released from prison within days of their convictions. The judge heard of two instances where women convicted for theft were out on the streets within a matter of days.

A spokesman for the Prison

Service told the Limerick Leader it was policy not to comment on individual prisoners. "But the Irish Prison Service has used temporary release as a way of regulating the prison population at times when there is pressure on numbers," he stated.

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