

News

Transatlantic solo rower Sean carries on as others slip oars

Anne Sheridan

ONE group of rowers has retired from the gruelling race across the Atlantic Ocean, but Limerick man Sean McGowan is nearly 25 days into the race and still on track to become the first Irish man to complete the journey solo.

As he continues to battle 40-foot waves, his family in Limerick is seeking the public's support to raise money for two worthy charities.

This Saturday, a fundraising night will be held in Dolan's to raise

money for the victims of the earthquake in Haiti, and Mr McGowan's chosen charity, the Soweto Connection, which was set up in Limerick and helps families in South Africa. Nearly €7,000 has been raised to date for the Soweto Connection.

The event, Help for Haiti, and Shout for Sean, will see an array of musicians, singers and comics come together to lend their support for these charities.

"To say that it has not gone well for him would be an understatement," said his brother, Tom. "He has

been thrown out of his boat twice by large waves. These waves damaged his ability to generate power and Sean was unable to use his desalination unit, which forced him to use some of his emergency water supply.

"He has had one oar washed away and another smashed by the sheer force of the ocean. His communications were, and continue to be, severely disrupted, which means he is not receiving all the messages of support that have flooded in."

Repairs to his vessel,

Tess, are also consuming a large amount of his time, as he journeys from La Gomera, one of the smaller Canary Islands, to Antigua in the Caribbean.

He has been made aware of the upcoming event and it is hoped that he will speak to the audience in Dolan's via satellite phone during the concert.

Tom said they hoped the event "will lift his spirits and give him renewed vigour and energy in his record breaking attempt".

Among those appearing at the event will be The O'Malleys, Citizen, Bren-

dan Markham and Band, Brad Pitt Light Orchestra, Sarah Dolan and Band, and The Termites Club with a live band.

Mr McGowan, 41, a former senior manager with Dell in Limerick, now has some 2,100 nautical miles left in his journey, and is hoping to complete the challenge in a maximum of 100 days.

Donations can be made at the door on the night, where a minimum of €5 is advised. To keep track of his progress, log on to www.atlantic09.com

A coffee morning to



Sean McGowan: battling 40-foot waves as he continues his solo row across the Atlantic Ocean

raise funds for Haiti will also be held in the Georgian House and Garden, hosted by Limerick Civic Trust, this Friday from 10.30am to 12.30pm.

Drug driver with cannabis in sock is disqualified

A bridge too far: Shannon crossing to stay closed for inspection

Petula Martyn

THE Plassey Bridge at the University of Limerick will remain closed until Limerick



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