

Tributes paid to rugby legend Mick English

By LUKE HOLMES

TRIBUTES have been paid to Limerick rugby legend Mick English following his death in Dublin aged 77.

Mick English, who died this Tuesday morning after a long illness, was a highly gifted out-half known for his lethal right boot and was capped 16 times for Ireland. He took over the number 10 position from the legendary Jack Kyle. His tenure as Ireland's number one out-half came to an end with the rise of another Irish rugby legend, Mike Gibson, and he won his last international cap in 1963 against New Zealand.

Brendan O'Dowd, who played with Mick in the Bohs 1959 Treble-winning side told the Limerick Leader that his friend was a great man and a fantastic player: "He was great, the centre of our team. We had the best half-back partnership in the British Isles, Mick English and Tom Cleary."

The man famous for his towering kicks was inducted into the Irish Rugby Writers Hall of Fame in 2008, when he was honoured for a great contribution in playing, promoting and managing rugby union.

English was the first player from Bohemians RFC to win a full international cap.

"In those days you had to be three or four times better than anyone from Leinster to get an Irish cap," said Brendan O'Dowd. "I remember Mick would get a cap and he'd play well. The next



The 1959-60 Charity Cup winning Bohs team with Mick English pictured seated second from the right



Mick English is presented with the Guinness Hall of Fame award 2008 by Peter O'Reilly, President of the Rugby Writers of Ireland, during the Guinness Rugby Writers of Ireland Awards

week he'd be dropped from the Irish team and they'd bring in some Leinster player who wasn't half as good as Mick was. Then they'd reluctantly play him again. They didn't care how good you were. If you were from Limerick, they didn't want to pick

you. "In the 1958 Munster Senior Cup final we were playing Highfield in Thomond Park. Mick got the ball one yard from our goal line at the Ballynanty end and he kicked it into touch five yards from the Highfield try-line. He was absolute-

ly incredible."

Mick was present for the reunion of the 1959 cup side last year, a day when the winners enjoyed dinner and shared memories of their famous victory.

"Mick the Kick", as he was known by admirers, became a club legend with Bohs before moving to Lansdowne RFC in Dublin where he also played for many years and where he is also fondly remembered.

He was selected for the 1959 Lions tour and many felt he was well positioned to challenge for a Test spot had he not been injured early on in the tour.

He was known to be a witty character, responsible for one of the most famous quotes in rugby, namely his response to a fantastic individual try scored by English international Phil Horrocks-Taylor: "Horrocks went one way, Taylor the other

and I was left holding the bloody hyphen!"

UL Bohs president Ted Mulcahy said this Tuesday: "I'd like to extend my sympathy to the English family. They've been an integral part of Limerick rugby down the years. His death is a loss to the club and to Irish rugby."

UL Bohs RFC has extended its deepest sympathies to Mick's wife Pauline and his children Michelle, Conor and John.

The UL Bohs website called him "one of the club's greatest ever players".

His removal will take place on Thursday evening from Carnegie's Funeral Home, Monkstown, to St. John the Baptist Church, Blackrock, arriving at 5pm. The funeral will be on Friday, after 11am Mass, to Shanganagh Cemetery.

Praise for Limerick gardai at conference

By PETULA MARTYN

Speaking at Limerick's Strand Hotel which host-

severely stretched. "You could say you'll

"There are only so many cars that each divisional

ments which suggested that members of An Garda Síochána are not