

# Limerick skipper storms to victory

## inside

**PAGE 6**  
Pet owners urged to  
use pooper-scoopers

**PAGE 10**



First 2006 baby boy  
born in Limerick

**PAGE 64**  
O'Malley persists in  
bursting boundary  
bubble

Daily news on the web @  
www.limerickpost.ie



Celia Holman Lee with Jean Mann from Kilcormac preparing for the Newbridge Silverware Mid West Bridal Exhibition in the University Sports Arena on January 14-15.

by Andrew Carey

SPEAKING to the Limerick Post immediately after his triumphant completion of the Sydney Hobart yacht race last week, Limerick man, and property developer, Ger O'Rourke of Chieftain Construction likened his jubilant achievement to the Everest of Sailing.

"The Sydney Hobart Yacht Race is like the Everest of sailing and it's certainly one of the toughest races in the world," said the tired but thrilled skipper of Yacht Chieftain.

Ger, a well known property developer in Limerick with business interests as far as South Africa, took his Bruce Farr designed and newly built Cookson 50 foot yacht to the other side of the world and lead a daring Irish challenge on the world sailing stage.

With his crew of 12, a number of whom are also from Limerick they took on the challenge of the 628 nautical mile course for the Sydney

Hobart Race, which is often described as the most gruelling ocean race in the world.

Sailing under the flag of the Western Yacht Club in Kilrush, "Yacht Chieftain" was just one of 84 vessels that left Sydney Harbour on St Stephen's Day to begin a sailing adventure that happily saw them arrive in the historic port city of Hobart some 38 hours later.

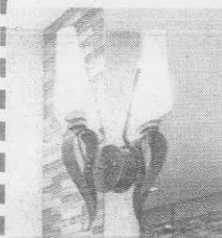
Fending off the main challenge from "Living Doll" a sister ship of Chieftain from the Royal Yacht Club of Victoria, their reward for this record time was victory for Ger and his crew in their particular sailing class.

Coming in a coveted fourth place in the overall race standings, this marked a success which up to last week had not been accomplished by any other Limerick or indeed Irish sailor to date.

Speaking to the Limerick Post in the early hours of the morning after

Continued on page 4.

**PJ Matthews**  
Tipperary Road, Ballysimon  
061 413722



**BATHROOM CLEARANCE  
SALE**

## Neurological service for Limerick demanded

by Marie Hobbins

A FORMER Mayor of Limerick, Cllr Michael Hourigan has dismissed as "waffle" an assurance given by a spokesperson for Health Minister of State, Tim O'Malley that "everything possible is being done to regularise the provision of neurological services at the Mid-West Regional Hospital."

Calling for the immediate appointment of a neurologist for the region, the councillor says that Limerick is at the bottom of the priority list for neurological services with many people having to travel to Cork or Tralee for consultant care.

In a recent Dail question to the Tanaiste and

**CLANCYS**

**THE GREAT SALE**  
continues...

PHILIPS

TV & DVD  
Plasma  
Screens  
LCD Screens  
Hi-Fi

**REDUCED**



# LIMERICK Post

www.limerickpost.ie

Rutland Street, Limerick.  
Tel: (061) 413322.  
Fax: (061) 417684 ISDN: (061) 204064  
Web: [www.limerickpost.ie](http://www.limerickpost.ie)  
Email: [news@limerickpost.ie](mailto:news@limerickpost.ie)

## Editorial

7th January 2006

### New years resolutions

THE clicking of champagne flutes, screams of Auld Lang Syne and general debauchery of New Years is all but a distant memory now as we head into 2006 with determined gusto to really keep our resolutions this time.

Aspiring to be better people, the first few weeks of January seem to be full of this passion to change our ways. And then somehow - it always tends to go horribly wrong.

Sometimes I wonder why we bother to subject ourselves to all this pain and misery, when January is already one of the most depressing months of the year.

The weather is miserable, we're broke, seriously in debt, suffering from the DT's from a lack of alcohol and then we force ourselves to give up the things we love in life.

I really think that January is the wrong month for New Year Resolutions and maybe they should be put off until June or July when we feel good about ourselves and the sun is shining.

At least we'd give ourselves a better chance of success. But despite the general doom and gloom of January, this time of year is still synonymous with giving up the fags, booze, fatty foods and everything else that we enjoy.

In recent years, astute entrepreneurs have even set up workshops to help us stick to our resolutions. And apparently one in Limerick was quite well attended last year.

The most popular New Year Resolutions don't tend to change much from year to year however. They include losing weight, taking more exercise, eating better, quitting cigarettes or cutting down on drink, sticking to a budget, aiming to save or earn more money, find a better job, become more organised, learn something new, be nicer or spend more time with family and friends and finally the epitome of it all to become a better person.

But although few of us will actually stick to our resolutions, the positive part of a new year is that it is a time to reflect on the past and the people and places that filled it.

Although many people don't understand the meaning of the song "Auld Lang Syne," which is sung at the stroke of midnight in almost every English-speaking country in the world to bring in the New Year, it literally means "old long ago," or simply, "the good old days."

And despite our personal disappointments in the past year, a new year seems to give everyone a fresh clean slate to start anew.

And despite the depression of January, that has to be a good thing.

## Limerick skipper storms to victory

Cont'd from page 1.

completing the race Ger said: "we're delighted, I'm delighted and the crew are ecstatic. We had a great start out of the harbour and conditions favoured us really well. The first third of the race is where we made up the most ground and we just tried to build on it from there."

This was the new "Chieftain's" first major outing after achieving an impressive fifth place in the Hamilton Island Race 2005. The boat was built and designed by New Zealander Bruce Farr but it will return to these shores in the coming months where Ger and his crew will mount challenges for the BMW Round Ireland Race and the Round Britain and Ireland Race.

Yacht Chieftain hopes to participate in many other European staged races such as Fastnet Race at the beginning of next August.

Speaking of his love of sailing and his delight at competing in the race for the first time Ger added: "it was my first time competing in this race as it was for almost all of the crew and the boat suited the race beautifully so we

did well. We really enjoyed it - it's a fantastic competition and a great way to see Australia and Tasmania. Mind you I'd have liked to see a little more of Tasmania as it was dark when we passed it".

Having what he described as an excellent start out of Sydney Harbour, Ger helmed the yacht for the first third of

the race and was pleased with their position as they searched for wind and vied for race position standings with fellow competitors.

They were not so fortunate in the second third of the race when they met with a change in weather as is a common occurrence in the Tasman Sea and the aptly named Storm Bay where heavy

seas and winds battered the crew for a number of hours.

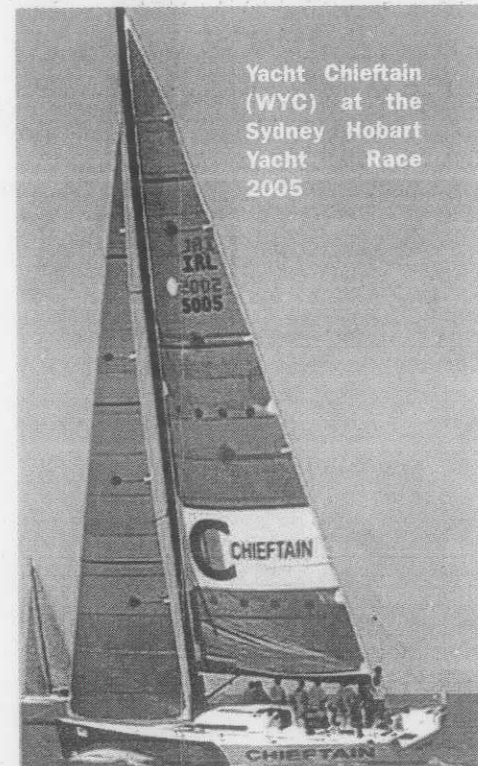
"We hit gusts of 50 knot winds at one stage and waves of almost 11 metres in height but were lucky to have had the wind behind us most of the time," explained Ger.

With speed indicators on Yacht Chieftain displaying figures of up to 24 knots on some occasions hopes were high for success in the race finale. However once again the weather changed for the last stage of the race into Hobart where previous high seas and heavy winds were contrasted by the becalmed conditions of the Derwent River. Frustrated that the race then turned to a drifting match, Ger recalled that some of the boats trickled past the finish line registering a speed over ground at just two knots.

With an actual elapsed time of 02:15:18:10 Ger O'Rourke, his crew and Yacht Chieftain powered their way to IRC Division B honours and a first place standing in the category. His success was further enhanced and merited when on the handicap scoring system "Chieftain" was placed in overall fourth place in the Sydney Hobart Yacht Race for 2005.

At the awards ceremony held on New Years Day, Ger thanked his crew and all the help and support that both he and the boat had received throughout this Southern sailing campaign.

Ger and the crew are due to return home in the coming days for a well deserved celebration and rest.



Yacht Chieftain (WYC) at the Sydney Hobart Yacht Race 2005

## Family appeal for help in finding brother's killers

THE family of a murdered Limerick car dealer have issued a heartfelt appeal to the public to help gardai find his killers on the third anniversary of his death.

Sean Poland, was shot dead at the front door of his home in Blackwater, Ardnacrusha, Co Clare shortly before midnight New Year's Eve 2002.

The 39-year-old was gunned down by a gang of up to six masked men after he answered his front door. His girlfriend, Joanne Lyons, had her hands tied behind her back and was left to watch as her partner lay dying and his killers

their efforts to come to terms with his death.

"If there is anyone out there who knows anything about Sean's murder, please contact the Gardai - no matter how insignificant you might think the information is," said Ray Poland.



Sean Poland

"We are missing him very much and need answers and we need them now. Sean's murder should never have happened and he should be alive today like all innocent people," he said.

"The Poland family would like to thank the Gardai for all the hard work they have put into this investigation but they cannot solve it without the help of someone out there who has the answers to Sean's murder," he added.

According to gardai the investigation into Sean Poland's death is still "very much active" and a garda spokesman said they are still hope-

## diary dates

### THURSDAY 5

CENTRESTAGE Theatre has a production of Jack & the Beanstalk at Millennium Theatre until Sunday January 8. 8pm nightly and some 3pm matinees. Mike Finn adaptation.

LIMERICK Panto Society continues with Aladdin at UCH until Sunday, 8pm nightly; some 3pm performances. Script by John Finn.

ATTENTION Deficit Disorder Midwestern Support Group's monthly meeting 8pm, Social Services Centre, Henry Street. Helpline 061-312621.

QUADRANT show of absurdist works by young Irish contemporary artists continues at Belltable Arts Centre.

MILES, Men in Limerick Experiencing Separation, support group meets Thursdays, 8pm in Social Services Centre, Henry St. Tel. 087-2603 603.

### FRIDAY 6

TOYOTA Ireland New Year Gala concert with the National Youth Symphony Orchestra of Ireland. 8pm curtain at UCH.

TRIPTYCH exhibition of Line by John Shinnors, LCGA, Pery Square; William Kentridge series on Apartheid politics in South Africa.

SCRIBBLERS Writers meet Pier One, 11.30am weekly. All welcome.

### SUNDAY 8

LAST pantomime performances at UCH (Aladdin) and at Millennium Theatre (Jack & the Beanstalk).

### TUESDAY 10

RAHEEN Toastmasters meet 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at South Court Hotel, Raheen, 8pm. Meet people, improve confidence.

### WEDNESDAY 11

ALZHEIMER Society Carers meeting at 7pm, 1 Grattan Street. Carers and professionals welcome. 061-313456.

LIMERICK Camera Club meets weekly 8pm room 202 at Mary Immaculate College, new members welcome. Monthly competition - theme of Sport, format slide. Paul Murphy LIPF, 086-3378478

### THURSDAY 12

PRESENTATION of drawing awards at LSAD exhibition, Church Gallery, Clare Street, 5.30p.

THE Limerick Special Olympics Network holds AGM 6-7pm at Down Syndrome Office, 73 O'Connell Street. All interested in volunteer work, in coaching, training, promotions, entertainment, are invited to attend.

### SUNDAY 15

HUNT Museum is host to musical Winter Sunday Supper Recitals series, 6.30pm meal followed by 6 concert weeks. Violinist Diane Daly and vibraphonist Boris Hunka are first in series.

## Neurological service for Limerick demanded

Cont'd from page 1.

Conceding that Ireland has the lowest per capita ratio of neurologists in Europe, she confirmed that her Department has recommended a tripling of the number of neurologists in the country and

West Regional Hospital which is a centre of excellence in the provision of services in many clinical fields still has no consultant neurologist," he told the Limerick Post.

In his absence abroad, a

Look  
Smy  
The hon  
Alread  
Great  
for 20

Dance away th  
iC  
nite  
every  
Friday  
Knuc  
Sunda