

# Ger's new racing yacht finally arrives in estuary

## SAILING

Gerard Fitzgibbon

LIMERICK skipper Ger O'Rourke has set his sights on October's round-the-world Volvo Ocean Race having received delivery of his new 70ft racing yacht in Foynes.

The managing director of Chieftain Construction, who became the first ever Irish winner of the Rolex Fastnet Yacht Race in 2007, had been looking to invest in a bigger, faster boat since deciding to sell his 50ft Chieftain yacht late last year.

His new boat, which he bought six weeks ago, arrived in Foynes last Friday and Mr O'Rourke told the Limerick Leader that he was hopeful it will bring him and his crew as much success as their old one.

"We bought it in Lanzarote six weeks ago, and we plan to have a refit done to it in Limerick in the next month. All things being equal, we hope to have it in the water by the first or second week in August. Hopefully we'll do well with her. Our main objective is the Volvo Round-the-World Ocean Race in October," he said.



Ger O'Rourke, inset, and his new racing yacht, Chieftain, which sailed into the Shannon Estuary before docking in Foynes last Friday

When asked how much the new boat set him back Mr O'Rourke, a former Limerick Sports Star of the Year, simply remarked: "If I tell you, I'll have to kill you."

He said that until he found a sponsor for the

new boat, it will also be called Chieftain. The previous Chieftain raced over 20,000 nautical miles in three years, and was designed by world famous designer Bruce Farr and built at Cookson Boatyard in New Zealand. The new

boat has a slightly modified design and is capable of speeds of up to 40 knots in open water.

Following his success in the Rolex Fastnet last year, which he completed in record time, Mr O'Rourke was honoured

by receptions at Limerick city and county councils.

He had previously notched up a victory in the Sydney to Hobart race, and has also received numerous personal accolades, including Cork Dry Gin Sailor of the Year.

The 2008/2009 Volvo Ocean Race will see competitors race between some of the most exotic port cities in the world, including Singapore, Rio de Janeiro, and Capetown. The race begins in Alicante, Spain, in October.

## Council expects Traveller housing

LIMERICK County Council expects to meet its own target of providing accommodation to 92 Traveller families in the county by the time its four-year programme runs out at the end of this year, writes Norma Prendiville.

Up to the end of June, councillors were told last Friday, 85 families had been provided with permanent accommodation since 2005.

The figures are in the Draft Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009-2013, which councillors agreed to put on public display and on which the public can make submissions.

But the draft programme report concedes

that achieving the target will involve "significant challenges".

Meaning the county has 46 families waiting for accommodation.

The report also says a new programme of accommodation for 2013, which targets 13 families, will be part of the programme.

Review of the programme points out that the capital

CHAPTER THEATRE

# King

## The Knights of

