

# News

## Limerick yacht crew heads for 'gateway to hell' storm

Alan Owens

WHILE they may be sailing in the oldest and least well funded boat in the race, Ger O'Rourke and Team Delta Lloyd are performing admirably as the first stage of the 10th Volvo Ocean Race speeds toward Cape Town, but they face their biggest challenge yet as a storm stands between them and South Africa.

At one stage the boat, which is being skippered by the experienced Limerick businessman, was running in fourth position in the eight-boat race. However, they currently lie seventh, having made the turn off the coast of Brazil, and are relying on strong winds to drive them toward the South African coast.

They should get a decent breeze as awaiting the 10 boats toward the closing stages of the 6,500 nautical mile first leg is what is being described as the "gateway to hell", or

two storm systems that are combining to form a huge storm.

Matt Gregory, navigator on Team Delta Lloyd - which has a crew of 13 including Ger - has described the storm they are heading towards in the latest dispatch from the boat.

"There is a storm brewing, a very big one," wrote Gregory yesterday, aboard the much-modified ABN AMRO One boat, which won the race in 2005/2006.

"If you lived along the coast in the south of the USA you'd be boarding up your windows and driving your car inland if you saw this storm coming your way. We are sailing towards it right now," said Gregory.

"This storm is a gateway to hell. My job over the next five days is to make sure that we don't fall into it and that both boat and crew get to Cape Town in one piece," he added.

Despite the pending

storm, and after 18 days at sea, spirits remain upbeat on the boat. Ger has, in his own dispatches, previously outlined his tactics in attempting to get ahead of the rest of the fleet.

"We are strategically positioning ourselves on the left of the fleet where we feel we may get to the high wind pressure before the fleet," wrote Ger recently.

"Life aboard is good as we all can not wait to get Delta Lloyd up to max speed in the 20 - 30 knots blast reaching we had as we departed Alicante."

The MD of Chieftain Construction added in another recent dispatch that he missed family and some home comforts.

"We have mixed emotions in leaving family behind on this great race I have been fascinated by all my sailing life. Freeze dried (food) is going down well (I have to confess I do miss my spuds), but all the crew is in good spirits."



Team Delta Lloyd skims across the Atlantic Ocean on its way to Cape Town in South Africa, but must avoid a major storm on the way

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## Gaelic Grounds plan gets green light from Council

John Hogan

IT would seem that the 18-month saga over the erection of flood-lighting at the Gaelic Grounds is nearing an end, as objectors to the development have indicated they will not be lodging any further appeals.

Limerick City Council granted permission to Limerick GAA for four flood-lighting masts, lighting to

"There are a lot of people in the neighbourhood put out about it, and a lot of them are GAA people, but I don't think we'll be making a further appeal to An Bord Pleanála. My information tells me that it would be a waste of time," said Mr Killeen.

Greystones Residents had objected on the grounds that the flood-lights - combined with a

by several other individual objectors.

"Look we are very disappointed by all of this but there isn't much more we can do now so we'll just have to let it lie," Mr Killeen added.

The Clareview Residents' Association lodged an objection with City Council on many of the same grounds as their Greystones counterparts.

# DUNNES

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