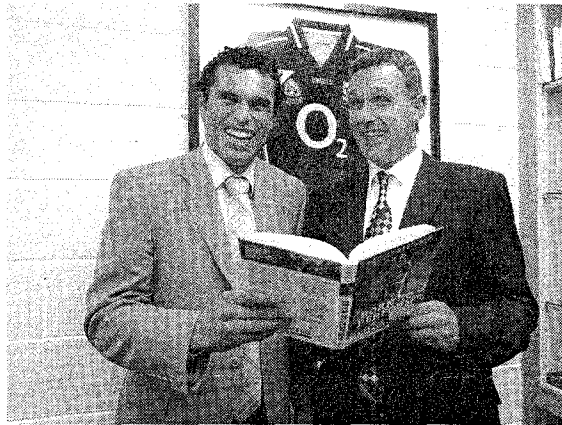
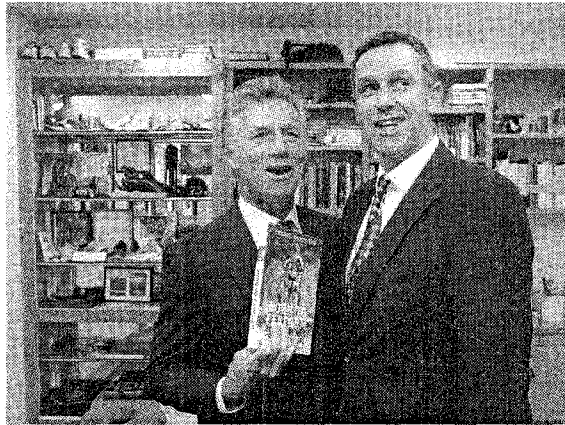


SPORTS NEWS GERARD HARTMANN'S BOOK LAUNCH



World champions: Gerard Hartmann pictured at the launch of his book 'Born to Perform' with Paula Radcliffe and Sonia O'Sullivan while below pictured with Eamon Coughlan and Sean Og O hAilpin.



Stars drop by for Hartmann's launch

Steven Miller

THE stars of the sports world were almost tripping over each other in UL on Monday night as renowned physical therapist Gerard Hartmann launched his book - Born to Perform, How Sport Has Shaped My Life.

Hartmann has treated many of the big names across all the sporting codes, including over 60 Olympic medal winners. And, after he was initially encouraged by Kilkeny hurling legend Henry Shefflin, he finally sat down to write his book earlier this year.

The book was launched by former 5000-metre world champion Eamon Coughlan and as the 300-strong crowd looked on, they couldn't but be impressed by the array of sports personalities that showed up to offer their support.

In one row of seats sat Sonia O'Sullivan, Paula Radcliffe, Brian Dooher and Sean Kelly. Behind them were Sean Og O hAilpin, Jamesie O'Connor and Eddie Keher.

On the opposite side multiple All Ireland-winning managers Brian Cody and Mickey Harte sat

alongside former Kerry footballer Seamus Moynihan while former Munster player Ian Dowling and Limerick athletic legend Jim Hogan were also in attendance.

Radcliffe, Britain's world marathon champion, is in Limerick for a week-long treatment with Hartmann while O'Sullivan travelled from Australia to be present.

"The book tells how, out of depression and despair, I came to reach the top of my profession as a physical therapist," said Hartmann, whose triathlon career was ended by injury.

"The book also gives advice on dealing with adversity and with stress and how to perform and excel in sport and in life. I want to inspire people to fly higher to see more, to empower people to use and maximise their God-given talents."

Hartmann paid special reference to his parents Patrick and Thecla and to his sports mentor in the Salesian College in Pallaskenry, Fr Martin Loftus. "I couldn't kick a football or wasn't any good at hurling," added Hartmann, "but Fr Martin Loftus directed me into running."

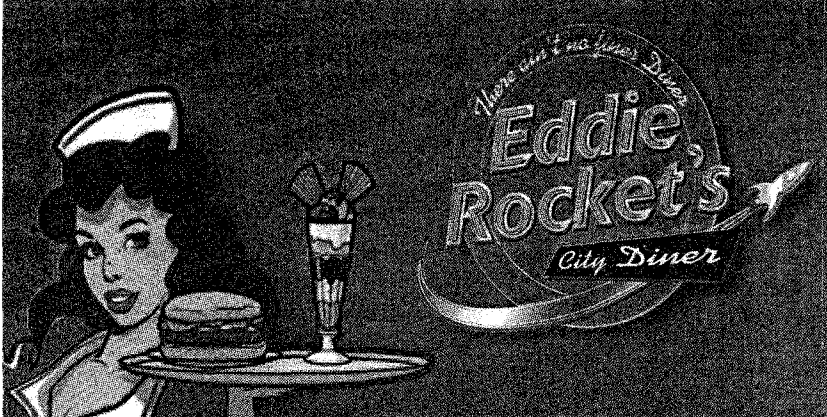
"I understand now the passion Gerard has for his daily work," said Sonia O'Sullivan. "He took his sporting passion and work-ethic and re-invented himself as a physical therapist determined to be the best he could possibly be."

"He knows the commitment required to be a world-class athlete. He has experienced success and disappointment along the way as an athlete himself, and this allows him impart his passion and motivation to every person that walks into his clinic."

Eamon Coughlan drew laughter from the crowd when he described the pain he endured as Hartmann worked on him.

"Some would say he's a sadist," he said, but he's not a sadist, he's a saint."

The book is on sale now - hardback costs €20 and the paperback is €15. All proceeds from the sale of the book go to Console, the national charity for supporting people in suicidal crisis and those bereaved by suicide.



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