

Evening Echo SPORT

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Drive on if Scat's your Daddy



**Robert
O'Shea**

THE LONGSHOT

THERE'S the FA Cup this weekend, but to be honest with you we won't be tipping any teams in that because our interest in the competition has sunk below our socks.

Ireland v Italy? We might watch it for 20 minutes.

It's too early to give you any bad advice about Cheltenham.

So what is it today we should be telling you to stick your tenners on? Not alone would I advise leaving the money in your pocket this weekend, I'd advise sewing it shut afterwards. To pass the time today, we will instead reminisce.

Past clippings of this column would testify to my not having a driving licence, but that all changed last week, when I avoided pavements and pedestrians and swerved my way to a certificate of competence.

Now that I have legal consent to soak strangers with puddles (this is far more dangerous when you don't have a car), my time spent queueing for buses will be seriously curtailed. And that is something I won't miss.

While another correspondent for this periodical has made a name as a tenacious interrogator on city bus routes, I doubt anyone in the city has had more conversations at bus stops than I have fitted in to my short life. Very rarely were these verbal assaults begun by me, other than the odd time inquiring how long another person had been waiting, or asking for a light.

No, lots and lots of people just decided I looked like a person who wanted to chat to a complete stranger. Mormons, morons, you name it, they have tried to initiate a conversation with me while awaiting public transport. And as my upbringing taught me to be courteous, I found myself nodding in agreement with some awful loons down through the years.

Was the strangest one with the lady who appeared to be holding a baby but was actually cradling a doll? I would have to say yes.

And what was it that convinced me she was certified rather than eccentric?

When she nodded towards the bus driver and told me he was the dad. **Recommendation:** We're going for a racing double tonight at Kempton of Topolski at 5/1 in the 7.55 and My Scat Daddy at 10/1 in the 8.55 for a 65/1 double.



Martina Murphy, centre left, and Kathryn Hewitt, respective winners of the CDO Satzenbrau A and B grade singles played at the Hollyhill Inn recently. Also included are, on left, Roy O'Donovan, chairman CDO and Daniel Jones of the Hollyhill Inn.

Hewitt comes out on top to claim crown

THE Hollyhill Inn played host to the Cork Darts Organisation Satzenbrau A and B grade Ladies Individual Championship.

The championship had the biggest entry for a ladies competition for many years with 96 players competing at the Knocknaheeny venue making for a marvellous atmosphere.

The two competitions were run separately at the venue, with 47 in the B grade competition and 49 entered in to the ladies B grade event.

First games began at the Hollyhill Inn at 8.30 sharp and there certainly was some intense games played throughout the evening.

The standard was of a very high quality from the vast majority of the ladies on the oche.

Both grades progressed to the semi-finals stage at approximately the same time and in the A grade semi-finals it was Kathryn Hewitt, the most decorated lady player in Cork darts from the Ma Dullea's team, who was searching for her 11th ladies Satzenbrau individual title.

She was taking on her Dullea's team-mate Kathleen Doyle in the game and beat Doyle to reach the final.

CDO DARTS

By Frank Goulding

The second semi-final brought together River Lane's Caroline Coutts and Anglers Sports Lounge player Nuala Madden, with the Anglers lady securing her final place on a 2-1 scoreline.

Top class darts then followed in the final from two outstanding players as Hewitt went on to take the opening leg. Madden fought back to win the second and square the match. In what was a very tight and high scoring final leg, it was the Ma Dullea's lady, who prevailed to take her 11th CDO Satzenbrau singles championship.

Meanwhile the ladies from the B division were also making their own strides in the competition and the first semi-final saw Martina Murphy from the Local take on and defeat Maura Lynch from the Widows by 2-1 and it was followed by the second semi-final of the B grade which saw another Local player in Kay Monahan defeat her Local team-mate Christine O'Mahony 2-1.

There was no stopping Murphy however in the final as she produced some really top darts to defeat Monahan by 2-0 and bring a wonder-

ful evening to a fine end for all concerned.

Tomorrow night at St Vincent's Hurling and Football club it will be the turn of the men as they go into action in the grand finals of the CDO Cork City individual championship.

The remaining 64 players, who have qualified for this stage, will play-off for the magnificent trophy which was first played for in the 1949/50 season when it was won by Tim Carey who represented the Corner House, and has been played for since then uninterrupted.

Eight former champions entered into the qualifying rounds of the competition and this number has now being reduced to only four, which does not include defending champion Damien O'Driscoll of the Joshua Tree who made his exit in the qualifiers.

Four times winner Chris O'Neill, three times champion John O'Shea, twice champion Stephen O'Connor and winner two years ago for the first and only time John 'Dinny Bobs' McCarthy are the former winners still remaining in the event.

Action at St Vincent's will get underway tomorrow night at 8.45pm and any player not responding to his name when called to play will be scratched.

Bray sees Munster's potential

CRICKET

THE Munster Cricket Union (MCU) youth squads were put through their paces for the first time this winter with ex-Irish international Jeremy Bray leading both sessions with local coaches assisting, writes **TED WILLIAMSON**.

The Delta sports complex was the venue and the New South Wales man was very happy with his first look at the province's talent, most of which hails from Cork clubs.

"There were some decent players there and while they have some good skills, there is an awful lot of potential within the group. It's hard to make much of difference in such a short time but hopefully I can give the local coaches some ideas which will supplement the overall MCU programme," said the Australian.

The facility, like all in Munster posed a difficulty in terms of having actual nets. However it did allow some quality drill time.

Bray was impressed with what he had to work with.

"I saw some good basic set ups and commitment to moving into the ball which is what I look for at this age. We can definitely make some small changes which should help the lads execute a little better."

It will of course not only be technical work as Bray has played with and against some of the world's best cricketers and in World Cups for Ireland.

His tactical awareness is second to none. Up until recently he was also involved in overseeing the Irish Senior ladies enjoying one of their most successful seasons ever.

"Mindset is an important thing for me and also doing what you do well under pressure. I know that's how I prepared for training and especially games. It helped me perform and I think that while we don't overburden these lads with too much in this area, it's really important that they start to think about all facets of cricket," added Bray.

Coaches can intervene too much and sometimes with no real plan or outcome in mind and it always seems to be the technical side which is the subject of their intervention.

Players however, especially at this age aren't going to remember that at a critical time in a match. They might though be able to increase some basic principles around tactical awareness and dealing with success and failure on the pitch.

The MCU has never gone down this route of employing outside coaches for their inter-provincial players but whether it be through necessity or good planning, it's a move that should reap benefits come the summer when the lads will be challenged on a national stage.