

Can you solve our Christmas Whodunnit?



Robert O'Shea

THE LONGSHOT

WALTERS woke late and when he stepped out of his bed he almost slipped on the empty bottle of scotch he'd pulled out of the Christmas hamper the night before.

To call it a Christmas hamper might be a bit misleading as it was really just his clothes hamper with some tinsel around its rim, but it was the only evidence of festive cheer in the tiny bedsit and he thought it brightened up the place.

He pulled a jumper from the hamper's jumble of tangled attire, gave it a sniff and pulled it over his head.

His pants he already wore.

A warm blast of air and stench of wet coats greeted him when he stepped into the bookies.

There seemed to be a commotion in the far corner and he was surprised the small huddle of sad-sack losers who were gathered there were staring not at one of the many screens, but at the slumped figure of Ned Nugent.

Old Ned's frame was resting on the counter and in between his fingers was a small green pen, underneath which was a betting docket on which the word "Murder" was scribbled. Walters had been kicked off the force 18 months before but still wore an air of authority and he fashioned a temporary crime scene before interrogating the customers. He was determined to solve the case before the cops arrived. He'd show them.

He narrowed his eyes and then narrowed his suspects to the five men who had surrounded Nugent. The cashiers were too shocked, and unless they were better actors than a man who's eating dinner at his girlfriend's parents' house for the first time, he was certain they weren't implicated.

The suspects were all regulars and he knew them on a nodding basis.

He reckoned he had less than five minutes to figure out who was responsible before the homicide unit barged in, so he decided to use one of the unconventional detection techniques that had been so successful and popular until that nosy reporter had established that Jimmy Rooney had fied on the chair as an innocent man.

He handed each of the five men a docket and a pen and asked them to write four words only on them in block capitals.

When they did so he instructed them to fold them up and throw them on to the floor at his feet.

The first four he read all said the same thing: "I didn't do it!" although one left out the exclamation mark.

The final one he unfolded read: "You'll never catch me."

He scrunched it up and threw it towards a bin on the far side of the room. As the men turned their heads to watch the docket sail into its jaws, he stepped forward and placed his hand on one of their shoulders. "You're under arrest for the murder of Ned Nugent," he said. The words felt good in his mouth.

How did Walters know who was responsible? Would it help him get his job on the force back? And are we going to give any tip today? Yes, and all will be revealed in the next instalment of Longshot.

Happy Christmas.

Recommendation: Glam Gerry in the Paddy Power Chase at Leopardstown at 10-1 with the eponymous bookmakers.



Munster head coach, Rob Penny cuts the ribbon at the opening of the new CBC stand at the CBC Lansdowne Pitch yesterday.

Picture: Jim Coughlan

Stand up and right for Munster

RUGBY

By SEAN MCCARTHY

IT MIGHTN'T have quite sent a shiver down their collective spines, but it must certainly have been strange for the former CBC players as they trotted out on to the Lansdowne pitch on Old Youghal Road yesterday for the start of a Munster training session.

The squad was training there under the watchful eye of coach Rob Penney, (coach and parent of two students in the school) as part of the Munster squads tour of the schools which has seen them train already at Crescent Comp in Limerick and PBC grounds in Wilton.

The other and probably more important reason from the school's perspective was that it was to coincide with the opening of the stand by the school at the pitch.

Dr Larry Jordan, principal, paid tribute to all the sponsors who have contributed to the building of the stand, but most especially, Barry's Tea, the main sponsor of the construction.

Dr Jordan also thanked teacher Russell Foley, who was in charge of the development and co-ordinated all aspects of the construction and sponsorship throughout.

The teacher in charge of co-ordinating the training and stand



Munster's Billy Holland, Donncha O'Callaghan and Rob Penny pictured at the opening of the new CBC stand are at the CBC Lansdowne Pitch yesterday.

Picture: Jim Coughlan

opening was teacher Trevor Hussey who was impressed by the amount of time the Munster players spent talking with the students.

"The stand is part of an ongoing set of additions within the school, and we were delighted to be able

to welcome Munster to coincide with the official opening of the stand.

"The students really enjoyed watching the players go through their paces and it was a real incentive for some of them to see players who were pupils of the

school not so long ago. Players such as Donncha O'Callaghan, James Coughlan, Duncan Williams, Stephen Archer, John Ryan and Billy Holland have all been through the school in recent years and it was great to have them back in the school."