

Buckley 5km to draw large entry

By JOHN WALSH

John Buckley Sports Road Race

TOMORROW evening sees one of the most popular and longest-established events on the Cork BHAA calendar take place, the John Buckley Sports 5km on the Marina.

Although a couple of weeks later than normal due to the Cork City Marathon, another huge crowd is expected, if recent BHAA races are anything to go by.

The Grandon Motors five-miler last week attracted around 300 participants so the John Buckley Sports record of 381 finishers from last year could well be surpassed, given a fine evening on the scenic Marina.

The venue is the usual flat and fast two-lap circuit and this will be the 23rd annual event.

The first race took place at Strawberry Hill in 1985 and the winner on that occasion was Limerick-man Paul Moloney.

Last year, on an ideal evening, Sandis Bralitis won in a time of 14:53, only 19 seconds outside Noel Berkeley's course record.

Carmel Parnell won the women's race for the third year in-a-row, her time of 17:31 ten seconds faster than she ran in 2005.

Entries and changing facilities are in the Lee Rowing Club, with 7.40pm the latest time to enter, giving everyone plenty of time to assemble for the start at 8pm outside the ESB Generating Station.

The Cork BHAA again urge people to arrive early in view of the large numbers expected.

As always, there is a comprehensive prize list including the top five men and women.

As well as the usual BHAA awards, there is a much sought-after T-shirt which goes to the top 20 finishers.

There will also be a free draw for a pair of running shoes to be raffled amongst the entrants, along with spots.

Further details of the race can be had by contacting John Buckley Sports at: 021-4508830.

● On Friday night (June 22), the seventh annual Bilboa 10km road race takes place near Cappamore in Co Limerick, starting at 8pm (10km walk at 7.30pm).

For further information contact: Tom Blackburn at 087-6994976.

Patient game pays off for the Big C



FACTFILE

Name: Ciaran O'Leary
Age: 33
Nickname: The Big "C".
From: Mount Rivers, Carrigaline.
Lives: Seattle, for the last year, moving there from San Francisco.
Family: Wife Dana from Colorado, two sons, Aidan 4, and Liam 2. One brother, John, also in America and sister Siobhan living in Carrigaline. His mother Sheila is from Surrey and lives in Carrigline, while his father Terry, who taught him to play poker, and was a well-known local greyhound trainer, passed away five years ago.
Occupation: Carpenter and plasterer.
Poker pedigree: Has won more than 30 poker tournaments in the US.
Claims to fame: Former Mr Cork and ranked no.77 in world poker, soon to be rising. First Irish winner of a poker gold bracelet since Dublin's Martin Furlong in 1999.
Least likely to say: "I'll fold then."
Most likely to say: "All in!"

ROBERT O'SHEA interviews \$750k man Ciarán O'Leary

CIARÁN O'LEARY, who was born and raised in Mount Rivers in Carrigaline, won \$727,012 and a prestigious gold bracelet after beating almost 3,000 players to clinch first prize at the largest non-World Series Of Poker Texas Hold 'Em.

His win at the event, which took place in Las Vegas was the third largest poker tournament of all time, after the World Series of 2005 and 2006.

How did you win?

"With great difficulty. No, as you can imagine there were a lot of great players involved in this tournament.

"It is the last major before the World Series begins next month. But you must realise I have played against these top guys for eight years now so nerves wasn't a problem, even though I'd have great respect for these players. The main problem was actually coping with the tiredness.

"On the first day, play started before 12 noon and ended at 3am. The next day, we played until 6.30am. I drank 10 Red Bulls just to stay alert. But the key was patience. You need a



Carrigaline King Ciarán O'Leary with his winning pot of over €500k.

lot of mental resolve in this game.

"It's all about psychology and maths. You have to be perceptive and watch other people, something I think Irish people are naturally good at.

"Take if someone says "good morning" to me I have to look out the window first before I agree with them. We're naturally inquisitive.

"For my own game I try to mix it up

a bit and not play the same hand the same way every time. Sometimes I leave my shades on, for other hands I take them off. And sometimes, the more I bet, the less confident I might be in my hand. You have to be consistent in being inconsistent.

"Though that may sound strange, it works, or it did for me anyway."

Where did you get your mental resolve from?

"I think some of it came from my dad. He was involved in the dogs in Cork and was a very shrewd man, someone who could see inside of people. I think I picked that up.

"You need to be a good judge of people in this game, tell when they're bullshitting or not."

Is that a particularly Cork trait?

"In some ways, yes. I'd be a big fan of Man United and Roy Keane. I've met him a few times and we talked of how we had similar backgrounds, working-class Cork upbringings.

"I think it gives you an ability to see through people to an extent, and obviously that helps in poker, like it does in any competitive sport."

When did you start playing?

"I was always competitive as a kid. played hurling and football like most young fellas and represented Cork in sprinting at the City Sports as a kid. I was also in road bowling; many a time I was down the bog road.

"I was into whatever I put my hand to and bodybuilding also gave me good discipline in areas of diet and fitness. But back to poker, my dad taught me how to play when I was nine and I was always playing against fellas older than me and I think that helped me develop quickly.

"In Ireland you are steeped in gambling from a young age too, and I think that can help when you come over to America, where there just isn't that tradition."

You say it's all about psychology and maths.

But are you superstitious at all?

"I am. I know some people will look on it sceptically but before I left Ireland I went to see the White Witch in Cobh. When she opened the door to me she said she saw a huge light.