

NA PIARSAIGH are the kings of Cork hurling in a great year for the city and county.

The Farranree clubhouse was and will be the scene of wild celebrations — and rightly so.

This is the third time the club has won senior county honours since 1990.

Cloyne made a tremendous effort yesterday and added hugely to the occasion in front of 22,000 spectators at Páirc Uí Chaoimh. The east Cork club can be proud of their contribution to

WE SAY

The Echo's viewpoint

Cork's hurling efforts in this All-Ireland year.

But the glory went to the northside black-and-amber boys who put 17 points on the board against Cloyne's ten. That was fair scoring in view of the underfoot conditions following last week's torrential rain.

Na Piarsaigh take a deserved bow

Congratulations also to the organisers of the Cashman's Bookmakers Irish Laurels. The biggest Munster greyhound event of the year was run off in front of a huge crowd of just under

3,000 at Curraheen Park on Saturday night.

It was a mighty occasion, especially for trainer Owen McKenna and his family after the stirring victory of

Boherduff Light. The success of the occasion was another confirmation that the Cork track is now one of the finest sporting and social venues in the country and that the sport of greyhound racing is hugely attractive to the public.

The investment by Bord na gCon in the Curraheen Park complex has been money well spent.

The Chairman of Curraheen Park, Jimmy Barry-Murphy, all the staff and all those associated with the track can take a bow.

TALKING HEAD

The egg and the presidential race

THE absence of a presidential race in Ireland this year means that we must cast our eyes away from this shore if we wish to witness the hoopla that surrounds polling day.

Our Presidential elections tend to be tame affairs anyway, and luckily, we don't have far to look to get our fix.

This week, we have an election with two candidates who hate one other; who use terrific smear campaigns to discredit each other; who wish to lead their country in entirely different directions (removing the country's troops from Iraq is a big issue for voters); who are too close to separate in the polls even at this late stage, and who have recently survived assassination attempts involving poultry products.

Yes, Ukraine went to the polls last night.

A concerned Evening Echo sub-editor butts in:

Come on, the readers knew that you weren't alluding to the American election. The Ukraine election twist was no surprise at all because of the way you constructed the paragraph preceding it. Such surprise twists are a cliché in journalism these days.

Point taken, but when there are two such important elections in one week you have to choose between which one to cover. Yes, there is an election in America this week but I just believed that



ROBERT O'SHEA on why it's important to mention this week's big election...

the Ukraine election has had less coverage in the media, despite being the biggest country in Europe with a population of close on 50 million. Maybe we can talk about Uruguay some other time.

Uruguay?

They held their presidential election last night too.

This is getting out of hand. Why exactly should we care about the Ukraine?

Well, for starters, the Ukraine is sandwiched between Russia and Europe and is therefore of major strategic importance.

But you're not worried about that.

Of course not. Ukraine's fourth presidential campaign since independence from the USSR in 1991 has plenty to interest an astute reader.

The egg incident?

Yes. While campaigning last month, leading presidential candidate and current Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich was alighting from a bus at a university in the western city of Ivano-Frankivsk, when he was struck by an egg. Although rushed to hospital, the Premier's press secretary

said his injuries were not life-threatening. Afterwards, Yanukovich said: "I went to Ivano-Frankivsk with my heart open. I wanted to see people and talk to them. I wanted to ask about their views on what is going on in Ukraine but I could not do it, as I was hit by an egg."

And despite TV evidence that he had only been hit by an egg, what did Yanukovich claim he had been struck by as well?

By other "hard obtuse things."

What might these have been?

Possibly hard-boiled eggs.

Could it have been some sort of revenge attack?

Yanukovich thinks so. His main rival, and slight leader in the polls, Victor Yushchenko had his food poisoned in what he claims was an assassination attempt earlier that week and because of it he now has difficulty speaking and one side of his face is paralysed. Yushchenko thinks Yanukovich is to blame and he addressed parliamentarians last week: "I am not a fan of eastern or western cuisine. I eat potatoes and salo, as do millions of Ukrainians. What happened to me is

not a problem of cuisine but a problem of the political regime in Ukraine."

Should that make sense to us?

No, but, there are some suspicions that Kuchma has ordered both of them killed.

Who is Kuchma, the chef?

No, the current incumbent in office. Some theories suggest that President Kuchma intended to assassinate his chosen successor (Yanukovich) so he could declare a state of emergency and stay in power. Kuchma also had little sympathy for Yushchenko after his misfortune. The president's deputy, who denied any wrongdoing in the incident, offered this advice to the candidate, who was then in his sick bed: "I recommend him to drink a hundred grams of vodka. If he had drunk that nothing would be wrong with him."

Things have been getting especially tense in the last week. A grenade was found leaning against the wall of the Ukrainian interior ministry. It was made out of papier-mache and sausages.

What are the journalists in the Ukraine making of all this?

Unsurprisingly really, they have gone on hunger strike. Last Monday a group of about 15 hunger-strikers, including Channel 5 news anchors Roman Skrypin and Danylo Yanevsky, started their protest as they wish to draw attention to government attempts to close their station down. It is the only

station not owned by big businessmen who support the government.

Now while I accept that the Ukraine may not seem like a great place to live in when you know all this, it sure beats for excitement the possible Dana-McAleese contest we were in danger of having.

Any questions?

Since cooking is essential to make food palatable and the oldest known primitive ovens were found in the Ukraine and date from 20,000BC, is there any connection you could make between this fact and the political climate of the country today.

I believe that would be a moot point.

What does 'moot' mean in this context?

I have no idea.

Do you think it is strange that you wrote about the role of food in the Ukraine presidential election campaign yet you never mentioned the most famous dish from that country?

I do.

And don't you think it is a bit of a cop-out using this sham question-and-answer format instead of writing something satirical and pointed about the upcoming US election (possibly drawing parallels with the fact that the Cossack Kievan-Rus Empire of exactly a thousand years ago in Ukraine was the most powerful in the world)?

Chicken Kiev.

YOU SAY

Let's clean up our city

● MY NAME is Brian Neenan. I live in Onslow Gardens, I am currently attending Gaelcholáiste Mhuire and I am 14 years of age.

I recently had to write about the problems in my neighbourhood for my CSPE class. There was one problem that stood out the most — this problem is litter.

We, as residents of Cork city, should be ashamed at the amount of litter strewn around our city.

A lot of the things people throw on the ground can be recycled.

I understand that people do not want to carry around empty bottles and other things. That is why I think that there should be more litter bins put in place.

I would like to thank you for your time, and hope that the problem is resolved in the near future.

**Brian Neenan,
Birchwood Close,
Onslow Gardens,
Commons Road,
Cork.**

● I AM a third year in Gaelcholáiste Mhuire and am doing a CSPE project on the things I don't like about my community.

There are a lot of things I do not like about my community, such as joyriders, fires and litter, which is the problem that concerns me the most.

When you see someone walking down the road eating their sweets or whatever they have, and just throwing cartons and paper on the ground, it really irritates me.

Well, I don't want to live in a dirty community. I think this is where the city council should do their job. They should be helping us clean this up as it's their country as well as ours.

So I think you understand my problem, I can guarantee no one wants a dirty community.

**Gabhán Mac Cárthaigh,
Gaelcholáiste Mhuire,
An Mhainistir Thuaidh,
Corcaigh.**

** All letters must include a full name and address, which may be withheld on request. We reserve the right to edit letters. Our contact details are at the foot of the page.*

Log on to our website at www.eveningecho.ie

HOW TO CONTACT US

PHONE

Newsdesk: Cork: (021) 4802142 or 4802154
Limerick: (061) 414495

Sportsdesk: Cork: (021) 4802228. Features: (021) 4802162

WRITE

Evening Echo, Academy Street, Cork or 89 O'Connell Street, Limerick.

E-MAIL

echo.ed@eecho.ie

FAX

(021) 4802135

THE LAST WORD

"Competence, like truth, beauty and contact lenses, is in the eye of the beholder."

Laurence J. Peter