

# Macrooom's new snooker club further boosts game

## SNOOKER

By DEREK KIELY

**MACROOM** has a brand new snooker club called 'The Rest and Spider Snooker Club' which opened its doors last Friday and reiterates the fact that there is a renewed interest in the game in both Cork city and county.

At the moment there are two tables with a third table on the way and let's hope that the mid-Cork club will have ambitions to play in the Cork Snooker League as well as the Ladbroke's Munster Snooker Club Championships in Killarney next January.

In the 1960's in Cork, snooker was booming in popularity as member clubs were dotted all over the city and county and at that particular time there was only two public halls, 'The Regal' on Princess Street and 'The Sovereign' affectionately known as the 'Sov' on Pana.

The Cork Individual Snooker Championships started at Fr Matthew Hall in 1965 with the first winner Paudie Atkinson. In 1966 Johnny Allen lifted the title of Cork Snooker champion, Johnny was also a member of Fr Matthew Hall at a time when snooker and billiards were everywhere.

The clubs in the city at that time included Greggs Hall on the South Mall on the corner of Grafton Street, St Columba's Hall in Douglas, Matt



Macrooom's new snooker club, which opened last Friday.

Talbot Hall on Shear Street, St Francis Hall, Fr O'Leary's Hall on the Bandon Road, the Cork City CYMS on Castle Street, Passage CYMS, Fr Matthew Hall and of course the AOH on Morrison's Island still a strong snooker and billiards club today and the only remaining operating city snooker and billiards club from the 1960's era.

In the county of Cork stood clubs like Youghal CYMS, Bandon, Clonakilty, Fermoy so the opening of a new snooker club in 2011 is pretty significant because it continues the re-emergence of the game of snooker in the Rebel county.

Cork Billiards Team Championship: The terms 'Double Balk' or 'In Off' are probably double Dutch to most young snooker players today as Billiards has really become a second game to snooker in terms of popularity, but definitely not in terms of skill. Billiards is a brilliant game for positional practice for snooker and is a very difficult and skilful game in its own right. There are still some very good Billiard players out there and the Cork Billiards and Snooker

Association have just run off the semi-finals of the Cork Team Billiards Three-Person Championship.

In the semi-finals, The AOH beat Shooters and Youghal CYMS beat Douglas Snooker Club, setting up an interesting final, which will be held in Youghal CYMS in the near future. Youghal CYMS will have the services of the 1985 Cork Billiard champion Brendan Cooney, Ger Swayne and William Kelly, the AOH will have Irish international Billiard player Tim Murphy, Lloyd Myers and Finbarr O'Connell in the first to '200' matches. More details on this championship will be available in next week's column.

The AOH held their confined 'Snooker and Billiards Championships' in Derry at the weekend. This is an annual event which is contested by teams from Belfast, Cork, Lisburn and Derry. The Cork A team of Shane O'Mahony, Lloyd Myers, Tim Murphy (Jnr) and Gerry O'Brien won the snooker competition defeating Lisburn and Cork B on their way to the final on Easter Sunday. Cork A ran out winners by



In 1966 Johnny Allen lifted the title of Cork snooker champion.

beating Derry A 2-1 in the final. AOH Cork has now won this event nine times since 1999, which is quite a record.

In the Billiards Championship, Tim Murphy (Snr) beat club-mate Lloyd Myers in the semi-final only to lose out to Paddy Donnelly of Belfast by 28 points after being 110 down.

Shooters' Open first anniversary

snooker tournament sponsored by EJ Riley on Sunday, May 15 is gaining momentum.

The tournament is sure to fill out the 64 names places with a prize fund of €1,000. For more information ring John Paul Crowley at Shooters Snooker Club, 7 City Square, Watercourse Road, Blackpool, Cork on 021-4552315.

# Jester offers much better entertainment than magician

THINGS have not been going so well lately. Recommendations have veered from the perverse to outlandish. If someone pushed me in the back I wouldn't tip forward.

Next Monday it will be six months since this column began, so you have received 100 recommendations up to today. As I plan a precise and independently verifiable breakdown this day next week (possibly conducted by Alex Burns of KPMG) of just how profitable or horrible things have gone, I can guarantee you this week's tips will be from the top shelf as I try to bump up my average.

What doesn't help the hard-working tipster, what undermines him as he

stays up late into the night making phone calls to shady Buckingham Palace sources about the possible colour of the queen's hat for the big wedding bash at the end of the week, is amateurs giving their tuppenceworth.

Take Keith Barry. OK, a few years back he somehow managed to correctly guess that Leinster would beat Leicester by exactly three points at rugby live on radio.

Now he is at it again, sealing three envelopes with predictions to be opened in a month's time and promising one of them concerns something particular happening to a leading figure in Irish politics.



Keith Barry is a magician, or as he would probably call himself, a mind illusionist, or as I call him, a twat.

You won't see me sawing rabbits in half or walking around with a deck of cards in my hand and accosting unsuspecting members of the public. I don't pretend I can peer into people's brains by using sly conversational tics.

So it would be nice if Mr Barry would stick to convincing impressionable people that he can catch live ammunition between his teeth rather than stepping on our toes, feigning he has a direct line to the near future.

Possibly I am jealous I didn't think of the publicity that handing over the three envelopes to the radio station has given the Waterford man. Maybe I should push some envelopes of my own. Although as I said earlier, just as if you pushed me, I wouldn't tip forward, no matter how much you push an envelope, it remains stationary.

Back to the business at hand and as we reside in the snooker page today,

we'll take a nose at the Crucible action, with the quarters getting underway today.

Ali Carter and Matthew Stevens were my tips at the beginning of the action but as they didn't fill any empty pockets, we'll change our mind and oppose them for now.

**Recommendation:** Mark Selby took a record six centuries in his match against Stephen Hendry. If the Jester from Leicester doesn't lift the title in that sort of form I'll eat a cube of chalk. Get on the 11-4 all the bookmakers are offering on him and on Northern Irishman Mark Allen to be a surprise finalist against him at 20-1 with Powers.