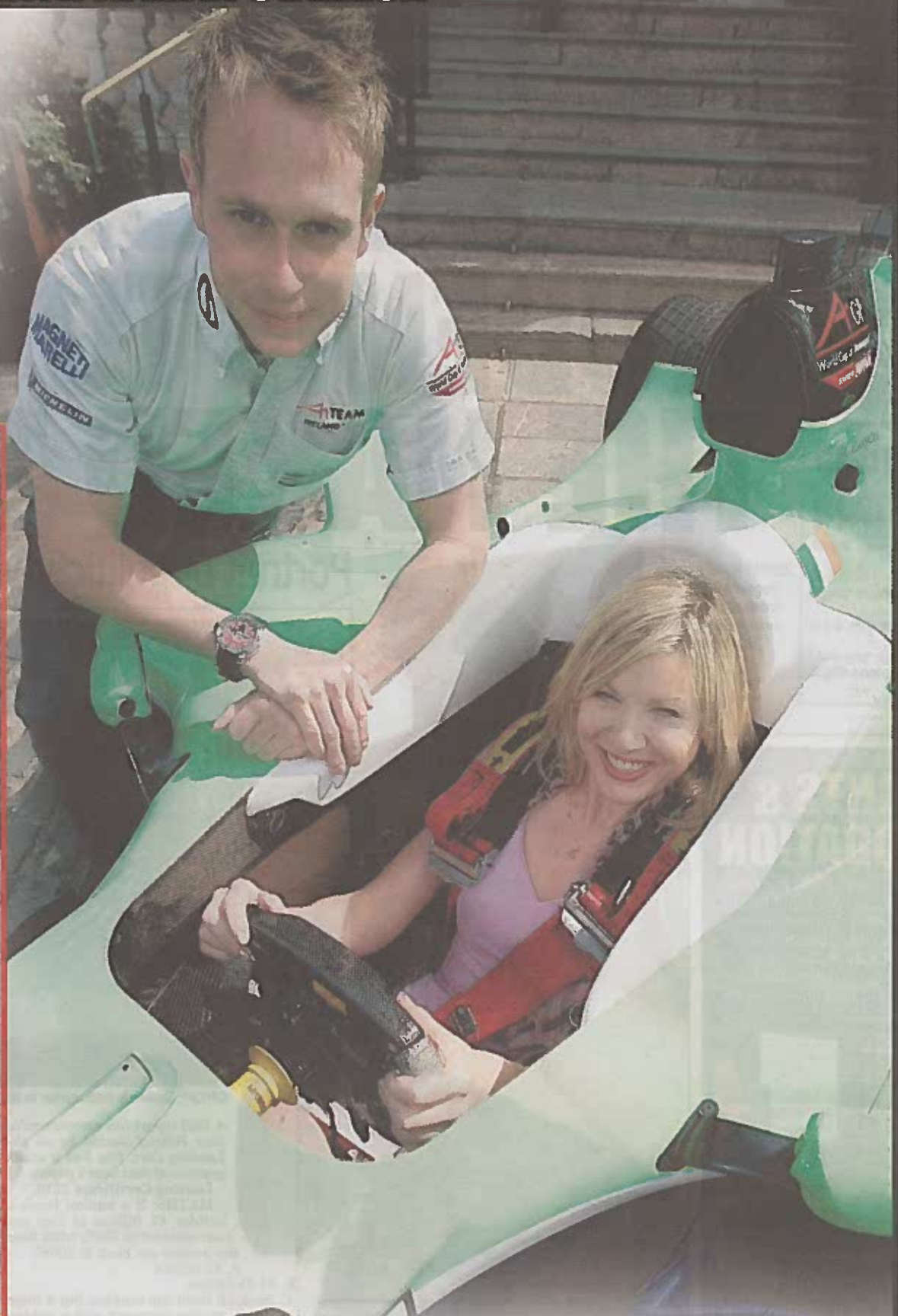


SHE GETS TO GRIPS WITH ITALIAN STALLION

A1



girls Georgia Saipa (far left) and Kareena Graham

World Championship

described Adam as "the one driver who deserves a shot at F1".

Meanwhile, our man is all revved up to be the A1 World Champion - which will mean outrunning 20 other countries. Having driven Ireland into first place in the championship after a stunning race in Portugal recently, he's expected to speed into top place at Brands Hatch next weekend (May 3).

Next pitstop will be the finals in Mexico on May 24. Sky Sports will screen the action live to around 50 million viewers.

Adam (right) also hopes to win the Indy 500 in America, which is regarded by motoring experts as the greatest race in the world.

Both Adam and reserve driver Niall have come a long way since they were 10-year-old lads racing go-karts and Adam says he got started by... Santa!

"My passion for motorsports began when Santa brought me a

go-kart when I was four," he says.

Niall says he resists the temptation to drive fast off the track by driving a Peugeot 307. "I don't want to get penalty points," he adds.

He has the enviable task of driving the Ferrari very fast just before a race so it's warmed up for Adam - and will fill in for him if he can't compete.

"I hope to be in Adam's position some day soon," Niall says.

Both lads can thank a group of passionate petrolheads for making their dreams come true. Team manager Dave O'Neill is a former F1 manager who used to work with Team Jordan, while boss Mark Gallagher has worked in the pitlane with Michael Schumacher, Jenson



Button, Rubens Barrichello, Damon Hill and Eddie Irvine.

Oiling the wheels is a team of investors, headed by Macao businessman Teddy Yip and including Irishman John Hynes - himself a former racing driver who has competed both in cars and powerboats.

They are pumping 4.5 million dollars into Ireland's great green hope.

And John Hynes says it will cost even more when Adam breaks into Formula One.

"It costs 280-450 million dollars a year to sponsor a team in Formula One. The amount that can be spent has been capped at €40 million but it's still a lot more than we're spending.

"But Adam is worth it. He's the best driver we've ever had."

If Adam becomes world champion in Mexico this month, the team plans to celebrate - by holding a race in the streets of Dublin. "We could be like Montecarlo," John said. "But all the manhole cov-

ers would have to be nailed down - otherwise the cars would suck them up."

While the mere thought of supercars tearing around Dublin streets is enough to make our Environment Minister green, even he would have been impressed if he looked in this car's fuel tank.

The car has been specially built to take a fuel mixture which is 85 per cent ethanol and the rest petrol, making it the ultimate green machine.

Vital

As if the car wasn't doing enough good for the environment and our national pride, it's also going to help pay for vital medical equipment to be installed in hospitals.

Team Ireland are setting up a scheme to ensure that proceeds from betting on laps go towards the Baby Max charity - named after a baby who died eight years ago of complications from meningitis because Temple Street hospital had not got the right equipment.

So, Baby Max's parents, Davina Ni Chuinneagain and Declan Donnelly will have the best reason ever to cheer on Adam at Brand's Hatch next weekend.



TREASURE: Pablo Escobar

Race on to find buried drug bounty

BY STAFF REPORTER

AN INDIANA JONES style race is on to unearth tens of millions of dollars buried in secret locations by late drug baron Pablo Escobar.

At least one team of mercenaries, led by former Scots Guard John Miller, is poised to join the dangerous treasure hunt in the jungles of Colombia.

It has been triggered by astonishing revelations over the whereabouts of Escobar's illicit bounty in a new book by his surviving brother Roberto, a former cartel 'accountant'.

In his book Escobar: The Untold Story of the World's Most Powerful Criminal, the cocaine king's brother tells how fortunes were simply buried.

Roberto writes: "Each year we would write off 10 per cent of the money because rats would eat it in storage or it would be damaged by water."

At the height of his power, Escobar, who was 44 when he was shot to pieces, was listed by America's *Forbes Magazine* as the seventh richest man in the world.

Mercenary recruiter John Miller is the Glasgow-born former Scots Guard who masterminded the audacious kidnapping of Great Train Robber Ronnie Biggs from Brazil in 1981.

Miller (56), said: "My men will be ready for any rumble in the jungle. The team includes six former SAS men who saw service in Iraq and Afghanistan."

FUNDAY WORLD

A UNION official cut off his own finger with a hacksaw and ATE it. The disgruntled worker took drastic action to highlight the plight of starving workers in Serbia who hadn't been paid in years.

UMA OUT OF THE PICTURE

UMA THURMAN has been busy explaining why she has been out of work for a while - her kids.

The blonde beauty says work has taken a back seat while she continues bringing up Maya Ray (10) and Levon Roan (7).

"I am able to take time out and really appreciate what I have," she says.