

BETS ON THE BOX

with **KEN ROBERTSON**



Following the phenomenal success of Paul the Psychic Octopus at predicting the results of World Cup matches from his home in Oberhausen Germany, Paddy Power teamed up with the National

Sea Life centre in Bray to give Paul's Irish-cousin Paddy a shot at predicting the outcome of sporting events a little closer to home.

'Paddy the Psychic Octopus' took up residence in his new home at Sea Life in Bray at the beginning of August and began his psychic training under the watchful eye of facility manager Pat Ó Súilleabháin. Paddy's first prediction on the All Ireland Hurling Final proved right on the money when the intuitive cephalopod chose to feed from a Perspex feeding box adorned in the Tipperary colours.

Buoyed by Paddy's apparent psychic ability, Paddy Power & Sea Life planned a major event around the Ryder Cup where Psychic Paddy would predict the winner of the historic golf event live via webcam. However psychic Paddy had other plans and last weekend, much to the disbelief of shocked Sea Life staff, laid hundred of eggs in his aquarium. The expectant 'Octo-mom' is now off her food with absolutely no interest in making predictions of any kind and even less interest in the Ryder Cup!

HARRY 8?

Meanwhile Harry Potter author JK Rowling has given fresh hope to wizard fans worldwide that there may be an eighth Harry Potter book in the future.



Speaking exclusively to US chat show host Oprah Winfrey, Rowling refused to rule out the possibility of another Potter book, despite previously saying The Deathly Hallows would be her last.

Paddy Power are now betting just 4-5 that another Harry Potter book will be penned but it could take over a decade to hit the shelves! The odds on an eighth book being published before 2013 are 4/1, while it's far more likely at 11/10 that it will be 2021 or later before another book manifests.

GIANT ERECTION

Finally, on Wednesday Paddy Power lost their ongoing legal spat with Monmouthshire County Council and were forced to dismantle their giant billboard from a site beside Celtic Manor Golf Course.

The 270ft Paddy Power promotional sign overlooking the Ryder Cup venue landed the bookmaker in Cardiff County Court to fight an injunction brought by the local council to have the sign removed.



Paddy Power himself was in court to defend his giant structure, the biggest freestanding sign in the world.

However, despite an energetic defence by the bookie, the Court ruled in favour of Monmouthshire County Council.

Unperturbed by the decision, Paddy Power are now taking bets on where the giant billboard will next appear - with the London Olympics emerging as the early 2/1 favourite. Less likely but also on the bookies shortlist is the home of the Celtic Manor Golf Course owner, Terry Matthews, at 500/1.

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By GERALDINE COMISKEY

● Pictures By EMMA JERVIS/PRESS 22

HE'S Ireland's wackiest GAA commentator - who turns the air blue when he takes the mic.

So this True Blue was GAA-ing to meet Effin' Eddie Moroney.

The milk-truck driver from Tipperary has been a legend ever since he commentated on an U-21 Gaelic Football county final in 1992.

The infamous clip, in which Eddie calls the ref a "b*****ks" and unleashes a string of obscenities at the hapless Nenagh team who were taking on his native Aherlow, has had nearly 40,000 hits on YouTube in the past month.

Thanks to Tipp's All-Ireland win over Kilkenny, Eddie's notorious rant is getting a fresh airing.

Now Eddie is the star of a new documentary, 'The Legend of Effin' Eddie', directed by his mate Mick Daniels, which is to be released on DVD next month in aid of Aherlow GAA.

And, with bootleg copies of the original video turning up as far away as China, the cheeky commentator is a household name everywhere from New York to New Zealand.

He doesn't give a puck about po-faced GAA officials who have complained about his rather sporting turn of phrase.

Eddie said: "A few years after I did the commentary, the club here in Aherlow got a call from a senior member of the GAA who said I was making a feck of Tipperary - only they didn't use words like that. They said I was bringing the sport into disrepute. 'We're the laughing stock of the country,' they said."

However, even "that b*****ks of a ref", Jumbo O'Shea has since forgiven Eddie.

Wipers

"I met him last winter at a game and we went for a pint. I said he needed wipers for his glasses because he missed an effin' penalty. Now he's a living legend - I made him."

Now, with revered Croke Park commentator Micheál Ó Muircheartaigh retiring, it would seem the way is clear for Eddie to take to the mic next year.

After I celebrated with the Tipperary folk earlier this month, the boss thought I could take a few Tipps from Eddie in how to report on hurling matches.

I half expected Eddie to tell me to eff off when I rang up asking for a chat, but he was a total gent. When he heard I was from the capital, he even sang 'Molly Malone' down the phone to me.

I caught up with him at his family's pub, Moroney's, in the picturesque village of Lisvernane.

The tiny village in the Glen of Aherlow has less than 600 residents. With its storybook landscape, it is the last place you'd expect to find a foul-mouthed effer like Eddie, but locals are proud of the man who put the blue in the Blue and Gold.

And Eddie's own heroes include Ó Muircheartaigh, legend Micheal O'Hehir - and motormouth soccer pundit Eamon Dunphy.

"Dunphy would be a bit like myself - I'd like to meet up with him in a pub some time."

Somehow I can't picture Dunphy belching live on air and announcing after the match: "Oh Jaysus I'm going to get sick after that... I had some feed of beer last night."

Eddie says now he just "got carried away" during the 1992 match. "You just get taken over by the passion. There was our little Aherlow team taking on the mighty Naynagh."

It was taking him over again as he relived the moment; his face flushed and his voice went up a few octaves as he explained what it felt like to be a commentator.

"You couldn't describe the feeling you get when you see your own team out there and some b*****ks of a ref is getting in the way of a victory!"

"I get a bit upset when we're losing and go wild when we're winning. I am fiercely competitive and Aherlow is my life."

Eddie got so worked up during his 1992 commentary that his false teeth flew out - and he made sure to tell the crowd - but his finest moment was celebrating the All-Ireland win with the Tipp team.

EXCLUSIVE THIS TIPPERARY MAN

EFFIN' EDDIE TAKES THE MIC



Why our girl's Tipping legendary

"I had to put on a suit and dickie bow - I thought I was strangled! And the water out of the hotel shower was scalding," he laughed.

"I said to me wife Kathleen: 'Jaysus, me arse is on fire!' We're not used to hot showers here in the Glen of Aherlow."

Earlier in Croke Park, the long-suffering Kathleen had gone to another part of the stadium to get some peace, while son Brian sat with his dad.

"A fellow beside us said his ribs were bursting because I kept digging him with my elbows. I couldn't help it. Brian said he might not sit beside me next time!"

Family

Eddie's entire family - wife, six brothers, five sisters, four sons, two daughters and nine grandchildren - "live and breathe GAA", Eddie added. His son Michael is a selector

for Aherlow senior team and son Brian coaches the hurlers.

Baby grandson Michael (eight months) already has a fine pair of lungs and will be ready to take over the mic from his granddad one day.

Eddie won a senior football medal in 1968 when he was 18, and managed Aherlow last year when they won the west Tipperary intermediate hurling cup.

His top Tipps for a budding