

BETS ON THE BOX

with Féilim Mac An Iomaire



X FACTOR: ODDS SLASHED ON ZAYN IN THE JUDGING SEAT



In the latest bout of news that no sane member of society will care about, Zayn Malik is rumoured to be in line for a judge's role on next year's X Factor.

This came as quite a shock to me as no gombeen who persisted with that spikey haircut for as long as he did should be in a position to judge anyone, ever.

Despite his management denying the reports, Zayn's odds have tumbled from a massive 50/1 into 8's after rumours started swirling, so much so that he's now fancied more than ex bandmate Louis Tomlinson who's currently available at 12/1.

Should Simon work his magic and pull off the coup, Paddy Power are offering a very tempting 11/10 for viewing figures to rocket and top last year's opening show as Directioners flock to get a glimpse of their hero.

ADIDAS 2/1 FAVOURITES TO DROP FIFA FIRST

The words 'FIFA' and 'scandal' are seen together more often than Jedward and there's no sign of the association subsiding following the latest drama which saw 14 of the governing body's top execs arrested.



The investigation is being led by the FBI (Football Bribery Investigations I think) and we're already betting on the fall out.

We make Adidas our 2/1 favourites along with Coca Cola to ditch the embattled association while Budweiser and Hyundai are both available at 9/2 to cut their ties.

Admittedly losing sponsors won't do too much damage to FIFA as the one positive that is bound to come out of the latest scandal is a multi-million dollar deal with Teflon.

RYANAIR 2/1 TO MAKE A €1 BILLION PROFIT IN 2016



The joke goes that Ryanair never land near their intended target but after recording a profit of €867 million it's fair to say that the airline is getting plenty of things spot on.

With the profits soaring as quickly as its planes we thought we'd start taking bets on when the airline will hit the magic billion in profits.

According to our good selves it's 2/1 for the Michael O'Leary led carrier to breach the €1 billion mark next year with odds of 9/4 available for them to pass the landmark in 2017.

PADDYPOWER.

CRECHE COURSE GER AT

WILD-LIFE

Our girl meets the volunteers out rescuing all creatures great & small

MEET THE Wildlife Warriors – a volunteer group of animal lovers who rescue all creatures great and small.

These orphaned baby badgers, hares, songbirds, owl chicks, a dormouse and fox cub are among thousands of wild creatures saved by the volunteers at the Kildare Animal Foundation (KAF).

There was a baby boom at their rescue centre just outside Kildare town when the *Sunday World* dropped in this week.

And I got a creche course in handling the boisterous babies.

A badger and hare snuggled up to me and tried to climb into my hair, while the owls seemed to think I was their mammy as they cheeped and stared at me with their big yellow eyes.

Snuggled

However, animal rehabilitator Dan Donaher warned: "They may look cute and cuddly, but these are wild animals and we'll have to release them into the wild when they're independent. If they get too used to humans, they'll approach people – and not everyone will be kind to them."

Still, the baby owls acted as if they were right at home as they had a rare owl bop on the kitchen table.

It was way past their bedtime so it was no wonder they acted as if they were in a nightclub.

"Daytime for them is night, that's when they really wake up and make a lot of noise," said Dan.

None of that bothers their room-mates the badgers and fox, but the others – two thrushes, two wood pigeons, two fancy pigeons and a blackbird – get their revenge at sunrise as they belt out the dawn chorus.

"It's mad in here when they're all making a racket," Dan laughed.

Two of the owls were found three weeks ago in a garden in nearby Allenwood.

"Their nest must have been knocked out of the tree in the high winds. They would have perished because they couldn't feed themselves – they were just hatched. We'll keep them until they are 10 or 11 weeks old, when they should be independent."

The baby girl badger was found in Monaghan.

"Someone was driving and found a dead mother badger and her live cubs. This one's sister

By GERALDINE COMISKEY

didn't survive. The other two badgers were found by a man in Kilkenny. We think their mother died in a snare. The State culls them because they are blamed for spreading TB to cattle."

The nearly-bald baby wood pigeons, meanwhile, were making themselves right at home in a knitted nest, which looked like an upside-down tea cosy.

"People make these lovely knitted nests for us. They're perfect for newborn chicks," smiled Dan.

While these creatures' natural habitats are hedgerows, fields and woodlands, home at present is a rather grand period house on seven acres.

Owner Geraldine O'Hanlon has been sharing her home with the wild animals, as well as dogs and cats, for the past 21 years – and it's usually a full house.

"At any one time, we would have over 120 animals here – we've even had wild deer and goats. Wild animals are sent to us from all over the country, because there aren't enough people who know how to care for wild

animals and other rescue centres pass them on to us," said Dan.

They rely entirely on donations from the public and fundraising events to feed the creatures.

Dan, who was trained at Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland in Co. Meath, volunteers at the KAF along with locals John Dowling (47), Jeff Smith (27), Paul McFeeley (27), Danielle O'Neill, and work-experience intern Chris Hamilton (16).

Donations

While it's a labour of love for these volunteers, they are also playing an important role in saving Ireland's native species.

"We have a licence for each animal from the Parks and Wildlife Service – that's how important these animals are to the country," said Dan.

As well as wild creatures, they also have cats and dogs, including the grand old lady of the kennels, Cherry, a beautiful 16-year-old springer spaniel.

"She was a stray. We found

the owners, but they said they were going to have her put down because she has an ear infection and she's old. So we took her and we're getting the vet to treat her ear," said volunteer John Dowling.

Cherry's kennel-mates range from a gentle mastiff called Clyde to Aria the Jack Russell.

John brings Harvey the Yorkshire Terrier for hydrotherapy at a pool in Blanchardstown every Saturday.

"He has a bad hip, but we're not sure if it was a congenital problem or if he was injured. He came from a puppy farm."

John, who has been volunteering at KAF for the past eight years, sometimes takes pets home with him to speed up their recovery.

"I've had a few dogs including a lovely collie-Rottweiler cross, but now I'm living in a flat so I just take kittens."

Paul initially only volunteered to keep Jeff company.

"Now I can see why Jeff loves spending time here. It's a nice feeling to know you saved an animal's life."



GOOD HARE DAY: Ger with baby hare and (below) Dan Donaher with pigeons in knitted nest

