

Lots of events planned for Roscommon Lamb Festival 2010



Roscommon Lamb Festival 2010 is a celebration of family fun, great food, farming, heritage, crafts and community spirit in County Roscommon, taking place on the May Bank Holiday, from Wednesday 28th April to Monday 3rd of May 2010.

The Lamb Festival is now in its third year and growing from strength to strength with a vision of creating a nationally-recognised festival for the Roscommon and Shannonside regions. Based on the fact that Roscommon has the highest lamb output in the country, the festival celebrates lamb in a diverse range of events over the course of the weekend.

As always, food, farming, heritage and family fun are the cornerstone of the festival – highlights include 'The RLF Restaurant' – a county-wide event that will see local personalities from all sectors

compete in a cook-off against each other in local restaurants. It will run over a number of weeks with the final being held on Friday, 30th April in Roscommon during the festival.

On Saturday the ever-popular Women in Business Fair and the BBQ Brazilia & Irlanda takes place. Sunday will see a massive Family Fun Sunday in Loughnaneane Park and the square with lots of fun with entertainment, face-painting, Pet Lamb, Little Bo Peep/Boy Blue Competition, a showcase of traditional skills as well as the Global Kitchen which highlights the diversity and multicultural of the people of Roscommon and how they can cook lamb in many ways in their countries.

Another farming aspect is the International Sheep Dog Trials that are taking place in Roscommon Town. A Wool

Village is planned for Market Square with sheep shearing, wool spinning, weaving, felt-making, knitting, dyeing, interactive weaving project and more. To end Sunday's festivities is The Big Ol' Barn Dance with 'The Crimson Crows' in the Festival Marquee – so get your dancing shoes ready!

If all that hasn't tired you out - the festival winds down on Bank Holiday Monday with a sponsored 10km mini marathon in association with the Roscommon Carers Association – led by a well-known personality.

This is just a snippet of what's going on during Roscommon Lamb Festival 2010 with many more events to be finalised. For more information visit: www.roscommon-lambfestival.com and follow us on facebook at www.facebook.com/roscommon-lambfestival



Michael Hopkins and Geraldine Garvin from Jackson's Restaurant, Roscommon pictured with Food Consultant, Clodagh McKenna. Jackson's Restaurant won the 'Best Lamb Dish' at last year's Roscommon Lamb Festival.

Mickey Joe, Rasher, Jedward and Tiesto

It's Sunday evening and I'm on the way home from work when a Mickey Joe Harte song comes on the radio. Now, I hadn't heard anything whatsoever about Mickey Joe over the last few years, and it got me thinking about how fleeting fame can be in the entertainment business, and more especially for the winners of the many talent shows that now dominate our prime-time viewing. It seems no length at all since Mickey, who I would say is a decent enough singer/songwriter, won the right to represent us, (i.e. Ireland), in the Eurovision Song Contest. He was going to be the biggest thing since the sliced pan. I don't know what happened to him since, but I would guess that the sliced pan is still pretty safe.

The following year, (I think), a fellow called Chris Doran from down Waterford way won the dubious right to follow in Mickey Joe's footsteps, and almost immediately was photographed with a spanking new bright BMW. He too has long disappeared off the national radar. I'm sure the two of them probably still do okay in their own local areas and looking back now I'm sure they wonder what all the fuss was about. I wonder is Chris still driving top of the range Beemers? The dream of fame and fortune has well and truly disappeared and you'd have to wonder was it worth it at all.

Locally, in Athlone, we had Donna and Joseph McCaul, and in fairness to them they still manage to have a relatively high profile every so often, even though, as far as I know they don't perform together any more – however you can see one or the other pop up on the telly every now and again.

However, the most spectacular downfall in this country was the demise of the band 'Six'. I remember on a Monday morning thousands of screaming fans turned up to see them – they had a no. 1 single with their very first record and that was it. Never heard of again and disbanded altogether after a couple of months. It certainly puts the extraordinary success of Westlife, and even Boyzone, into perspective, and we can only hope that the new kids on the block, 'Jedward', can prove the exception to the rule and continue to grow from strength to strength.

A couple of girls that I know were at the X-Fac-

tor Tour in Dublin last week and said that 'The Twins' were absolutely incredible. The funny thing was that they thought everyone that took part were better entertainers than the lad that actually won it, Joe McElderry. Anyway, it's a tough business and anyone that makes it deserves everything that comes their way.

Sticking with entertainment, the young lad and a few of his friends were in The 02 Centre, (formerly The Point), for a Tiesto Concert during the week. Most of you will have no idea who Tiesto is, but he's the coolest of all DJs and he's Dutch. They couldn't get over the price of drink. It was up to €10 for a can of lager, while a pint was almost €7. I know you can charge anything you like for alcohol, but in my opinion, it's just another example of 'Rip-off Ireland'.

Speaking of Ireland, I can't get over the almost hysterical reaction to Saturday's defeat at the hands (and feet) of the Scots. We had all known that our scrum might well be in trouble and that the Scottish back row, the killer B's, would make life difficult for us, but I will admit that the meltdown in our line-out was not quite so predictable. Rory Best, The Hooker, and the person who throws the ball, has said that he was mainly at fault, and that, basically he simply didn't hit his targets and I suppose as he's only human, it's both understandable and forgivable.

I often think that us ordinary folk never make any allowances for the fact that all these sporting heroes are only human and might just not be feeling 100% all the time. They may well wake up with a stomach bug, or a touch of the flu, and obviously if they do it's hard to perform to the best of their ability.

The same of course applies to horses and dogs, except they can't even tell you what's wrong, so it's always possible that even the very best of them, such as Kauto Star last week in Cheltenham, can have an off day. That's what makes sport so unpredictable and what generally means that the bookies come out on top.

Anyway, back to the rugby and something The Rasher pointed out some time ago was very much to the fore again on the RTE panel this weekend. He reckons that we are back in the seventies and eighties when anyone who could

kick a rugby ball, provided he was from Leinster, was put forward for Irish caps, and so we had a succession of one-cap wonders from Blackrock and Belvo, (old Belvedere) and Wanderers, all of whom hardly deserved to even sit in the Lansdowne stands, never mind grace the hallowed turf. And so, Leo Cullen, Shane Jennings and Eoin Reddan, who have all in the past shown themselves to be slightly short of international quality, would have sorted out the mess, and Declan Kidney, who a year ago was a Messiah, now has his judgement called into question by Tom McGurk, Conor O'Shea and Brent Pope.

As I said last week, we have been blessed to witness the most successful, productive and enjoyable era ever in Irish rugby, and instead of ridiculous recriminations, maybe we should take our feed of humble pie and acknowledge that, on the day, we were beaten fair and square by a better team. Please God if we are still all alive, (or even if we aren't), our tour next year will roll into Edinburgh when we will be looking for revenge – watch out ye Scots!

Anyway, back to the present and for a couple of weeks I have struggled to tell you about the work of the charity V.S.A. for whom I am presently on a fund-raising drive and of the great work they do in darkest Africa. However, if anyone saw the Sports Relief programme on BBC 1 last week, where we saw the effects of Malaria and many other diseases in different African countries and where the lack of even the most basic medical supplies was so critical, they will now understand the absolute necessity to try and do something to help out those poor people. Sometimes we tend to moan about our own situation, but, in truth, we are so lucky and have little or no idea of what it's like to live in abject poverty and where 15 children will have died as I write this sentence from disease or malnutrition. Accordingly, on Easter Sunday night, I ask everybody out there, (all 60,000 of the People's readers), to come to Gannon's on Creggs for a night of music and dancing.

The wonderfully talented John Shannon from Longford way is providing the music and we will have the usual raffles and stuff on the night. As with the quiz, admission is optional, so I

would ask you all to come along and have a good night's craic and also help save a lot of lives in Tanzania. I have often bemoaned the demise of parish nights, where neighbours can socialise together and have a bit of fun, so for all of us in the Creggs area, this is our chance to dig out the dancing shoes and show the world why you were the Olivia Newton John (or John Travolta!), of your era! Look forward to seeing you there – will remind you again next week

*So, 'till then,
bye for now.*

P.S. Belated Happy Birthday to Katie Muldoon who made it to 21+ a couple of weeks ago! Well done, Katie.



Frankly
Speaking ...
with Frank Brandon