

Irish Examiner



100 DAYS' VERDICT

What the first 100 days of Taoiseach Brian Cowen's term has told us

NEWS: 8, 9

Thursday, August 14, 2008



MOMENT IN TIME

Irish photographer's Ethiopian portrait selected for cover of Time magazine

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ORLA RINGS UP 600 POINTS



Orla Houlihan, Killarney, Co Kerry, celebrates getting nine A1s in her Leaving Certificate.

Picture: Dornnick Walsh/Eye Focus

by Jennifer Hough

HIGH achievers around the country are celebrating top grades in their Leaving Cert exams.

Head of the class this year was Orla Houlihan, 17, from Killarney, a student at Intermediate School, Killorglin, who achieved nine A1s in French, physics, chemistry, music, biology, maths, applied maths, English and Irish.

"I didn't think I would do that well at all," she said. "I am amazed, to be honest, that it is the highest mark in the country."

A further 13 students across the country achieved eight A1s.

In a remarkable achievement three students from the same



Students from St Joseph's Convent, Lucan, celebrate their results.

school — Christian Brothers College Cork — were among those who achieved eight A1s.

Toast of the Cork college were Ian Chisholm, Mark Moriarty, and Kevin O'Keefe.

Three other schools in Cork also boasted a student with eight

A1s — Kate McCutcheon from Mount Mercy College, Model Farm Road; Kenneth Howick from Colaiste Christ Rí, Turner's Cross; and Eabhann O'Connor from St Aloysius College, Carrigtwohill.

Students at four Dublin schools were also celebrating full marks in eight subjects. They were: Sinead Newsholme at Skerries College; Dearbhla Doherty, Muckross Park College, Donnybrook; Liam Townsend from Castleknock College; and Conor Leahy from Templeogue College.

Other students who achieved eight A1s were Robert Murphy from Rice College, Ennis; Craig MacLitháin from Colaiste na Corrib, Galway; and Sinead Cawley at Mercy College Sligo.

After years of falling numbers, there was a small increase — to 55,000 — in the number of candidates who sat the Leaving Cert this year and a drop in the number of those repeating.

For students who feel they did not achieve expected results, the Institute of Guidance Counsellors has opened its helpline for students and their parents, and will answer concerns and queries about their results and college offers.

The helpline — 1800 265 165 — will open from 10am to 8pm on Wednesday; 9am to 8am Thursday; 9am to 4pm on Friday and 10am to 8pm next Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

NEWS: 12 & 13

O'Keefe orders review of €2bn college funds

Minister targets use of lecturers' time in fees probe

by Niall Murray
Education Correspondent

THIRD-LEVEL colleges could be told to divert funding from administration back into teaching and student services following a spending review ordered by Education Minister Batt O'Keefe.

Mr O'Keefe has asked the State spending watchdog, Comptroller and Auditor General John Buckley, to investigate if taxpayers are getting value for the €2 billion his department spends each year on third-level education.

The findings will form an integral part of the review of whether college fees, which cost the State €332 million annually, should be reintroduced. Mr O'Keefe plans to have a number of institutions examined, to see that money is being directed at students, particularly those at risk of dropping out.

"In terms of value for money, I want to look at the

whole lecturing profile, I want to make sure that the senior people in our universities, who are the most professional, have the greatest experience and who can make a valuable contribution to the students are actually in the classroom from time to time," he said.

The Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT) said it hoped Mr O'Keefe was referring to the disproportionate time academics have to spend on paperwork but said increased funding is needed, not another review. "Every hour that academics spend on administration and seeking external research funding is an hour lost to teaching students. The core funding of universities is only rising 2.5% this year, but it should be going up at least 6% if we're to provide the same services as last year," said IFUT general secretary Mike Jennings.

Mr O'Keefe said the spending review would inform a third-level strategy he expects to produce in

about 18 months, to address how colleges are funded, including the question of fees.

As students and Labour Youth protested in Dublin against the return of tuition fees, the minister said those who got their Leaving Certificate results yesterday would not face such charges this autumn.

Mr O'Keefe also defended the education system against criticisms about a further increase in failure rates in Leaving Certificate maths. He said the gradual roll-out of a new curriculum to schools from this year, which will be first examined in the 2012 Leaving Certificate, was better than taking drastic steps to address the crisis.

More than 55,500 student collected their results yesterday, and at least 42,000 of them will be hoping to be offered a place in college from the Central Applications Office next Monday.

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Fears of salmonella risk in sandwich fillers

by Stephen Rogers

CONSUMERS have been warned not to eat a number of sandwich filler products amid fears they may be linked to the current salmonella outbreak.

The fillers, which are available from Dunnes Stores, Supervalu and Tesco, have been withdrawn from the shelves, but a number of packets have already been sold. A number of other products are also being investigated including bacon pieces used in certain pizza toppings.

Last Friday, chicken, beef and bacon products used in

Subway sandwiches and other products originating from Dawn Farm Foods' plant in the Maudlins in Kildare had to be withdrawn after they were linked to the salmonella agona strain.

Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) confirmed the number of people who have contracted the outbreak strain stands at 10 in Ireland and 100 in Britain. As part of the latest warning, FSAI said cooked bacon supplied to Kerry Foods had been incorporated into a number of branded retail packs of chicken and bacon sandwich filler tubs which were sold through the

Product recall

■ Dunnes Chicken and Bacon Sandwich Filler 170g — use by August 13-18.

■ Supervalu Chicken and Bacon Sandwich Filler 170g — use by August 13-18.

■ O'Brien's Chicken and Bacon Sandwich Filler 170g — use by August 13-18.

national retail chains.

"These products have been withdrawn by the retailers, but there is a possibility that consumers may

have them in their homes and so the retailers are recalling them from customers," said the FSAI.

In the interests of public health, the FSAI is again advising that products processed on the same production line as the salmonella positive products at Dawn Farm Foods (plant number 734) should not be used.

FSAI said some of the products from the implicated production line were incorporated as food ingredients in other food products, which may not receive sufficient heat treatment to eliminate salmonella. It said bacon pieces from the

affected Dawn Farm Foods may have been used as pizza toppings and ready-meal ingredients. Alan Reilly of FSAI said some of those secondary products may still be on the market.

"It is imperative that all food businesses check the source of their ingredients and if it has originated from Dawn Farm Foods (plant number 734) they are strongly advised to check if they have used the products listed on the FSAI website, to withdraw these from sale and to contact the FSAI with details," he said.

● The FSAI's advice line is 1890 33 66 77.

NEWS Peaches weds

Peaches Geldof chose to walk down the aisle without her famous father in a last-minute wedding in Las Vegas. The surprise marriage followed a whirlwind romance with American singer Max Drumme

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Insurance hike

As householders around the country face another clean-up after the heavy rain, insurers warned there could be a big hike in insurance premiums if the Government does not take a more centralised approach to flood prevention.

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WORLD Bush support

President George W Bush told Russia to end the crisis with Georgia and ordered Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to Tbilisi to show "unwavering" US support for the former Soviet republic.

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Punter power prevails as Pádraig costs bookies €7m

by Conor Kane

PUNTERS who cheered Pádraig Harrington to victory last weekend can smile knowing that they have helped make him the most expensive Irish sportsman ever — for the bookies.

His Open Championship and US PGA wins this year have cost bookmakers Paddy Power and BoyleSports almost €7 million.

Golf guru and Racing Post expert, Jeremy Chapman, said Harrington has cost Irish bookies more than any other sportsman.

Pre-tournament odds of 20/1 proved tempting for many, while last year's major breakthrough at Carnoustie had some prescient punters collecting at odds of 33/1.

Given his dominance this year, he won't be offered at such generous odds again. Current listings from Paddy Power for next year's Augusta Masters have the Dubliner as low as 12/1, with BoyleSports best-priced at 14/1 and he's just 10/1 to repeat his Open triumphs. "There's no way even Tiger could have shot 66-66 as Pádraig did in one

day at the US PGA, and it is entirely possible that, at the moment, he is the best golfer in the world," said Chapman.

He described Sunday's showdown between Harrington and Sergio Garcia as topping "anything we have ever seen between two European golfers at the highest level. What it has done to those poor Irish bookmakers is so heart-breaking that all we can say is 'tough luck lads, for once punter power prevails!'"

EDITORIAL: 16

OUTSTANDING RESULTS 2008!!!

Bruce

COLLEGE

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550 POINTS OR HIGHER = 3 TIMES NATIONAL AVERAGE

500 POINTS OR HIGHER = 3 TIMES NATIONAL AVERAGE

400 POINTS OR HIGHER = DOUBLE NATIONAL AVERAGE

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