

Of course we're not saying you've a big head Henry...



Homecoming: Conor Dwyer, left, with Henry Shefflin and, inset, the welcome scenes in Kilkenny

HE may be the top championship scorer of all time and – thanks to Saturday's three-point defeat of Tipperary – the proud owner of a staggering 10 All-Ireland medals, but big-headed? Henry Shefflin?

Ordinarily we wouldn't agree but the 'King Henry' waiting to cheer on the returning conquerors yesterday certainly would have required a sizeable crown.

This enthusiastic fan was just one of more than 20,000 Cats supporters who thronged Nowlan Park yesterday evening to acknowledge the Kilkenny senior hurlers' latest Croke Park heroics in which they won a 35th All-Ireland title for the county. And it wasn't just all about the sen-

By Eamon Donoghue

ior hurlers, with both the senior and intermediate camogie sides – who contested finals recently – and the All-Ireland-winning minor hurlers hailed before Brian Cody's side arrived at around 5pm.

Earlier the team had kicked off the celebrations when they arrived at Kilkenny Castle at 4pm. They then travelled by open-top bus with the victorious minor team to Nowlan Park with fans lining the streets in their thousands to congratulate their team.

Kilkenny GAA told the Irish Daily Mail that the huge numbers in the stadium and on the

streets last night was due to the fact that this was the first homecoming celebration ever held on a Sunday.

As a result of this year's final going to a replay, which then fell on a Saturday, the county council wanted to prepare a Sunday evening event for the whole family to enjoy.

There was live music in the stadium from English rock band The Troubadours as well as The Ambassadors. First on stage, however, were the crew from Keep Kilkenny Beautiful, as they too got the chance to show off their All-Ireland final trophy captured for being crowned the country's tidiest city in the Tidy Towns competition earlier this month.

Brussels set to reveal findings of Apple's Irish tax dealings

By Kevin Keane

ALLEGED backroom deals between the Government and Apple will be unveiled this week with the publication of the preliminary findings from the European Commission into the IT firm's tax affairs in Ireland.

According to a Financial Times report, the Government will be accused of making special tax agreements with the makers of the iPhone which could face fines of several billion euros.

Apple has had a presence here since 1980 but has been accused by critics of using its Irish operations to avoid paying tax to the US authorities and to our Exchequer through an accounting exercise known as the 'double Irish'.

But Apple's chief financial officer Luca Maestri has insisted that his firm has not broken any laws through its tax agreements with Ireland, saying: 'There's never been any special deal, there's never been anything that would be construed as State aid.'

'We were simply trying to understand what was the right amount of taxes that we would have to pay in Ireland.'

The investigation is one of a series being carried out by the European Commission. Starbucks' presence in the Netherlands and Fiat Finance and Trade's involvement in Luxembourg are also being investigated by Brussels.

President talks organ debate

PRESIDENT Michael D. Higgins has said that too many people die each year waiting for organs.

Speaking at the National Commemorative Garden for Organ Donors in Salt-hill, Co. Galway, he paid tribute to the generosity of organ donors and their families for providing the greatest possible gift to others.

He stressed that, however sensitive the issue may be, society must not avoid discussing the moral or ethical questions raised by organ donation.

Enda in fresh cronyism row over jobs for the boys

By Senan Molony
Political Editor

ENDA Kenny was under renewed pressure last night after fresh revelations about cronyism were linked to his Government.

Following the fiasco over the appointment of a Fine Gael Seanad candidate to a quango, it emerged that a number of people connected to Government parties were appointed to the UCD board last week.

Now Fianna Fáil has upped the ante by revealing that of the 1,854 board appointments in this Government's lifetime, only 650 were publicly advertised – and just 21 per cent were filled by the public.

The Taoiseach is now under pressure to put an end to cronyism by reforming the entire State board appointments system – and taking it out of the hands of the government of the day.

Mr Kenny was put back into the

BIG PHIL'S BRUSSELS POST IS 'THE LAST STRAW'



Anne O'Connell

A FINE GAEL stalwart who was the butt of a crude remark by Phil Hogan has criticised his nomination as an EU commissioner.

Anne O'Connell has questioned whether the former environment minister should be allowed such a plum post. The 72-year-old, who is from a loyal Fine Gael family, said Mr Hogan's nomination was the 'last straw' and she will no longer vote for the party.

She said Fine Gael was now 'rewarding

the man who, more than anybody else, put in place policies that have hurt the least well-off in our society'.

The woman was the target of a joke by Mr Hogan at an Oireachtas golf event.

She said in yesterday's Irish Mail On Sunday: 'Where were all those women TDs in Fine Gael who had been so outspoken in their condemnation of sexism and their support for women's rights?'

Mr Hogan was contacted about her remarks but did not respond.

spotlight again by the revelation of the appointment to the UCD board of the principal of the school where the Taoiseach votes in Mayo.

Vincent McHale, an acquaintance of Mr Kenny and a former headmaster at St Patrick's Boys' National School in Castlebar, was appointed to the university board last week.

Among the others appointed to

UCD's board by Education Minister Jan O'Sullivan was Pat Lacey, a Fine Gael councillor from Waterford, and Dermot Lacey, a Labour councillor and former lord mayor of Dublin.

Micheál Martin, the Fianna Fáil leader, is seeking a debate in the Dáil tomorrow on the Taoiseach's handling of the Seanad by-election and the appointment of John

McNulty to the board of the Irish Museum of Modern Art.

He said: 'This controversy has gone on way too long and the Taoiseach needs to answer very fundamental questions that have been ignored to date. His half-hearted apology on Friday has not cleared up the mess.'

'I expect the Taoiseach to attend the chamber and to give a detailed

explanation, outlining the entire sequence of events.'

Meanwhile, Gerard Craughwell, an Independent candidate in the Seanad by-election, is set to meet his legal team today and may launch a court challenge to stop the whole process.

On Friday Mr Kenny said he took responsibility 'for perhaps not taking a closer view as to how this evolved'. He said it was 'not my finest hour', but he pledged: 'It is not going to happen again.'

It is now expected that State appointments will be sorted with an independent form of control.

Sinn Féin's Mary Lou McDonald said the question was whether Mr Kenny directed or encouraged Arts Minister Heather Humphreys to appoint Mr McNulty to the board of IMMA.

She said: 'He [the Taoiseach] campaigned against the cronyism, corruption and skulduggery of past Fianna Fáil administrations, and then engages in the same behaviour himself.'

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