

INSIDE LINES

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Body

CRICKET Wilson gives Irish some Dutch courage GARY WILSON returned to form with a morale-boosting 44 from 32 balls in Dubai yesterday as Ireland recorded an encouraging 30-run victory over the Netherlands in the first of two official warm-up matches ahead of the T20 World Cup qualifiers.

Skipper Wilson hit a six and five fours to help rescue the Boys in Green from an early slump, and with Harry Tector and Mark Adair chipping in with valuable cameos a total of 156-8 was posted.

Seamer Craig Young took 3-21, Adair followed up his hard-hitting 24 with 3-28 and Tector, who made 21, took another stunning catch as the Dutch were bowled out for 128.

BOXING Ward positive after 'successful operation' JOE WARD feared his career was under threat after he was left writhing on the canvas in agony after a freak knee injury at Madison Square Garden earlier this month.

The Westmeath light-heavy dislocated his left kneecap early in the second round of his pro debut versus Marco Delgado and had to be taken to hospital and has since gone under the knife.

"It was a successful operation. The doctor was happy. He gave us a 98 per cent sure it will never happen again," said Ward.

"I was worried because I didn't know what damage I had caused in my career. I was in a lot of pain."

GAELIC GAMES Daly steps down as Crokes hurling boss ANTHONY DALY has stepped down as Kilmacud Crokes senior hurling manager after two years in charge.

The former Dublin and Clare boss (pictured) brought Crokes to last year's county final, where they lost to Ballyboden St Enda's after a replay.

This year, they were soundly beaten by Cuala at the quarter-final stage.

"It came to a natural end," Daly told the Irish Independent.

"It was a one-year project really but we were so close last year, so unlucky, that it just felt right to go again.

"But we were beaten by a great Cuala team who, to be honest, look like they go could all the way again."

Daly linked up with the Stillorgan club in 2017 after stepping down from his director of coaching role at the Limerick underage hurling academy, a position he had held for three years.

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Yesterday, Daly ruled out any possibility of taking the vacant Clare manager's job or being part of a potential back-room team for Brian Lohan, should his 1995 and '97 All-Ireland winning team-mate get the job.

He did, however, suggest he would be willing to manage Clare at some stage again, "if circumstances were different in the future".

- CONOR McKEON CYCLING Rás still searching for sponsor to revive race RÁS TAILTEANN organisers face a race against time in their hunt to find a sponsor to get the event back on the road in 2020.

The eight-day race appeared on the official UCI calendar published last week, prompting calls to race director Eimear Dignam from continental teams expressing their interest in competing. However, unless a sponsor is secured in the coming weeks it will not take place for the second consecutive year.

"We've put it on the calendar again for next year, as we did the previous year," said Dignam. "But at the moment we've no sponsor."

AMERICAN FOOTBALL Illinois and Nebraska set for Dublin Classic THE University of Illinois and University of Nebraska are coming to Dublin for the 2021 Aer Lingus College Football Classic.

The game will take place on August 28 at the Aviva Stadium and will be the second fixture of the five-game series, with Notre Dame and Navy due to get the ball rolling next year.

This will be the first time Illinois and Nebraska have travelled to Ireland and up to 25,000 fans are expected to follow them across the Atlantic.

The teams for the 2022 game are expected to be announced early next year.

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