

BOXING SPECIAL NATIONAL STADIUM IS SET

TRUE BLUE DUB

TRUE BLUE Dub Robbie Murray is no ordinary boxer – and he intends to prove it when he steps into the ring for an Irish Light Welterweight title showdown with Michael Monaghan next Saturday night.

Murray is one of the main supporting acts when Bernard Dunne puts his unbeaten record on the line in his second National Stadium outing of the year, but the 28-year-old from Ballyfermot has a story every bit as compelling as Dunne's, the great white hope of Irish boxing.

In fact there are so many strings to Murray's unique bow that it is hard to know where to start and where to finish with this first cousin of Irish super middleweight champion Jim Rock.

Asthma

As a baby he was diagnosed with chronic asthma and told never to even consider normal life never mind big-time sport as he spent half his childhood in and out of Crumlin's children's hospital.

Unperturbed by such medical opinion he took to the ring at the Matthews club in Ballyer at 12, developed a unique breathing pattern that cleared his lungs with the help of coach, and was so good as an amateur that he fought for Ireland and lost out to Francie Barrett by just a point in the Seniors.

Today he is very much his own man. By day, business college graduate Murray drives a taxi in his



CATHAL DERVAN
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Irish boxer Robbie's a real battler

native Ballyfermot while by night he works on a novel that is the Dublin male equivalent of Sex In The City and is already attracting real interest from those in the literary world.

But above all he is committed to making the biggest impact he can in an Irish pro boxing game finally starting to make waves again in the wake of Dunne's decision to move home.

"I know I am never going to make millions from boxing but I aim to make the biggest impact I can," said Murray, as he completes his preparations for next weekend's fight at John Breen's gym in Belfast.

Heart

"I'll probably not get a world title at this stage but I do believe that I am the best out there domestically and in Britain in the welterweight - light welter divisions, and I'd like to retire with a couple of attainable titles."

It would be easy to dismiss Murray's confidence and optimism as foolish but it would certainly not be wise. This is a man who has spent most of his 28 years on this planet battling against the odds.

Boxing offered Murray hope when doctors were convinced his life would never be normal.

"I was chronically sick with asthma from the age of about two to 12 or 13" recalled Murray. **"Even at the age of 10 I had the lung capacity of a two year old and was on everything from inhalers to steroids."**

"I was a scrawny thin kid who basically had no life in my body. I could walk around the corner and I would end up in hospital. There was one particular year where I was in and out of hospital every week.

"I had asked the doctors could I box. One particu-

