

FOR MORE DRAMA ON SATURDAY NIGHT

JUST WON'T BE DRUBBED



SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS: Murray (right), seen here winning against Ceri Hall in February, is a business college graduate who was told as a child not to try boxing because of his chronic asthma

lar doctor was sympathetic but said unfortunately my lung capacity was too weak to be getting involved in a sport like that, that it wasn't a realistic option, and I was going to need care for the rest of my life.

"I had other ideas though and I started training with the Matthews club in Ballyfermot. The head coach there was Stephen Maher and his ma had chronic asthma just like me. He worked with me on breathing techniques and stuff like that and by the age of 16, after developing and increasing my lung capacity I had got rid of it totally. That's an eye opener for a lot of asthma sufferers. They can do something if they put their minds to it.

"I have had people in touch with me for advice but I am very careful with it.

Healer

"They have to build up slowly, it's about techniques of breathing, exercise, diet but at the same time I am not saying that I am a healer. If someone needs antibiotics they need to go to a doctor."

Murray has just five pro fights to his name in his three years in the paid ranks but what he lacks in experience he more than makes up for in confidence.

"I'm the best there is in Ireland at the moment," is his matter-of-fact

opinion. "People who saw me outpoint Ceri Hall at the Stadium in February said it was one of the best fights the Stadium has ever seen.

"It was all action and that's typical of me. I'm not a purist, I know I'm not the best technical boxer in the world but I have a bang and I promise you there isn't an Irish fighter out there with a bigger heart.

People in the know say my book is a fascinating insight into the male psyche

"I proved that against Ceri Hall. He had me on the ropes early on and I hurt my hamstring as well but I never gave up. I couldn't walk for a week afterwards but it was worth it."

One prospective fight dominates Murray's wish list more than any other, a pro return against his old amateur nemesis Barrett.

"I have been calling out to Francie

Barrett for a couple of years now but I don't think he's ever going to take an Irish title fight against me because he knows I'll beat him," claimed Murray.

"I was disappointed for him that he didn't do better in the Stadium the last night because a good performance by Francie would have put pressure on him to take me on.

Hope

"I have asked him two or three times and the offer is still on the table if Francie is brave enough to take it. In the meantime my aim is to win the Irish title at light welter and welterweight, then see what happens.

"I have found it hard to get fights up to now, guys don't want to fight me, but once I am Irish champion it should be easier. I have been sparring with world champion Wayne Alexander and I am fully focussed on this fight."

In between training bouts in Belfast Murray is working on his book. "I've the laptop with me and it's something that excites me," he says. "It's about four guys on a night out in Dublin city centre. People who know these things say it has a fascinating insight into the male psyche. I'm hoping to get it published in the next six months."

In the meantime there's the small matter of an Irish title fight, another belt and another notch for Robbie Murray. Don't bet against him.