

BOXING

THOSE KEANO EYES

FRIGHT OF STARES

Maynard: If Magee didn't like it, you'd know

By **KEVIN BYRNE**



ROY KEANE had it — and Eamonn Magee did as well.

A death stare that could send shivers down your spine.

Boxing publicist Richard Maynard found himself working a Mike Tyson fight just three months into his career and also had a huge role in promoting British stars Ricky Hatton, Joe Calzaghe and Amir Khan.

But light-welterweight Magee was the one he most advises against getting on the wrong side of.

Maynard (below) joined News Ireland podcast The Rocky Road this week to tell the story behind the stories from his 22-plus years in the fight business.

The Magee v Hatton bout, 20 years ago next month, is one he remembers well.

The Irishman from republican Belfast scored a first-round knockdown but did not go for the finish.

And Hatton worked his way to a points decision — and a career that banked millions and took him all the way to Las Vegas.

Maynard recalled: "Eamonn was a tremendous fighter in the ring but you look at him and he's like Roy Keane — he'd look at you with that stare and you'd think, 'nah!'"

"He's a hard man but he was absolutely fine in terms of press. He did everything and his manager was Mike Callahan who was an absolute legend in the sport. If you ever had any difficulties, Mike was very good at helping.

"We did a press conference in Manchester for Eamonn Magee v Ricky Hatton. I got an Irish pub called Waxy O'Connor's in the Printworks and I was just looking to set up a little picture.

"I had a little toy leprechaun for him to hold up and do the picture. I said, 'Eamonn, can we do this?', and he looked at it and gave me that Roy Keane death stare.

"And he said, 'I'm not effing doing it. You want me to hold up this toy?'"

"And I said, 'Yeah, please, it's just like a tabloid shot'. So he walked off, he might have been thinking about it or speaking to Mike, and he came back, 'I'll do the picture'.

"But the poster, that was probably the biggest story. We called the fight Anarchy in the UK because

LOVED A GOOD TEAR-UP ...
Eamonn Magee lets rip at the 'Anarchy' poster



it was June 1 and it was the anniversary as well of the Sex Pistols album.

"Of course if you know the album cover, it's got a union jack on it.

"So we got the separate images of the fighters done, got them imposed on to the poster, all fine.

"We got the posters printed, sent them out, and I'm on the phone to Eamonn, 'Did you

get your posters?' And he says to me, 'What the eff am I supposed to do with this?'"

"I said, 'Why, what's the matter?' He goes, 'There's a union jack on it'.

"Oh no. I said, 'Eamonn, this is the theme of the fight because it's on June 1 and we've called it Anarchy in the UK' — and obviously that created a few problems. I don't know if he ended up putting any up. I didn't press him on the matter."

Maynard got his break in boxing in the early 90s when he went to Brendan Ingle's gym in Sheffield to

help out and the Dubliner took him under his wing.

Ingle got him a gig with Frank Warren straight out of college — a Michael Gomez bout was his first to work on — and then it was Tyson v Julius Francis, a monster event.

As well as Magee, he has worked with a host of other Irish fighters and has tales on them all — from Francie Barrett to Martin Rogan, Neil Sinclair to the McKenna brothers.

Rogan was a man of many nicknames but 'The Entertainer' was one — for his PR man as much as anyone.

Maynard said: "What a character he was. The big man. With him it was like the Rocky story because he had basically come from nowhere, went into Prizefighter and won it, beat Audley Harrison on one of our shows and then he fought Matt Skelton in a real war, think he stopped him in the 11th round.

"Then he had two wars with Sam Sexton, so he made his name in those fights.

"He was an absolute warrior. Constantly throwing punches. But such a big character as well.

"With him we did a photo based around the Rocky poster because it was a Rocky-type story with him.

"We did a poster called Rogie and had the picture of him outside the steps of a building pretty much like Rocky in Philadelphia.

"He was game for anything. Such a lovely man and a big laugh.

"On the Taxi Driver theme, that's what he was in Belfast so we ripped off the film from Robert De Niro!"

Maynard left Warren to go out on his own in 2016.

Since then he has worked with promotional outfits run by David Haye and Mick Hennessy — leading to the McKenna brothers link — and he is now with Sky Sports' Boxer series.

London cruiserweight Richard Riakporhe is one who particularly excites him there.

Maynard said: "He's knocking on the door of a world title fight but some of the stuff he's doing is incredible.

"He disappeared after his last fight but called me when he came back. 'Richard, I've got a story for you'.

"I said, 'Where you been, I've been trying to get you since the fight, we had some press to do'.

"He goes, 'I've been in Nigeria'. I said, 'Oh, OK, visiting family?' And he goes, 'No I had to be smuggled into Nigeria because if it had been publicised that I was going, I would have been captured by Boko Haram'.

"I goes, 'What were you doing?' and he said 'I was there as an ambassador for Street Child, helping the charity with the work they do with the kids, so I couldn't let anybody know I was going — but can you get some press coverage on it for me?'"



RADUCANU ... niggles

Emma's KO fear

By **ROB MAUL**

EMMA RADUCANU faces a race against time to be fit for the French Open.

The British ace, 19, retired from her first-round match at the Italian Open with a back injury.

Raducanu was 6-2 2-1 down to Bianca Andreescu when she left the court in Rome, telling a physio: "I can't move."

She has had a nagging leg issue which hampered her at last week's Madrid Open and had admitted before facing Andreescu, 21, in Italy that she was 'managing' the problem.

It is the fourth time, starting at Wimbledon last summer, that Raducanu has retired during a match in the last year.

The clay-court Grand Slam begins in Paris on May 22 and Raducanu is due to play in the main draw for the first time.

Legal Notices

South Dublin County Council

Edel Bradish wish to apply for planning permission for (1) Conversion of Existing attic to non-habitable storage use (2) remodel of existing hip roof profile to 'Dutch Hip' to the side (3) provision of dormer to the rear (4) rooflight to the front roof and all associated site works at 137 Cherrywood Drive, Clonsilla, Dublin 22. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at the offices of South Dublin County Council, County Hall, Town Centre, Tallaght, Dublin 24 during its public opening hours of Monday to Friday from 9:00am to 4:00pm, and may also be viewed on the Council's website - www.sdcc.ie. A submission or observation in relation to the application may be made in writing to South Dublin County Council on payment of a fee of €20 within 5 weeks of receipt of the application by South Dublin County Council and such submissions or observations will be considered by the Planning Authority in making a decision on the application. The Planning Authority may grant permission subject to or without conditions or may refuse to grant permission.

Dublin City Council

Planning Permission is sought for, 2 No. of 2 bedroom, 2 storey dwellings attached to side of existing dwelling with new vehicular access points to dwellings and associated site works at 20 Croftwood Crescent, Cherry Orchard, Dublin 10 for Rodney McDiad. The planning application may be inspected, or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, at the offices of Dublin City Council during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

Fingal County Council

Planning permission is sought for Construction of an end of terrace bungalow to side, with conversion of existing detached garage to rear of existing family home, internal modifications to existing dwelling, use existing vehicular entrance & create new vehicular access for existing dwelling, with connection to existing foul sewer & associated site works, in a rural cluster at 18 Meakstown Cottages, Dubber Cross Dublin 11 for Liam Walsh. The planning application may be inspected, or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, at the offices of the planning authority during its public opening hours and a submission or observation may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee (€20) within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of this application.

A FOAL LOT OF LOVE

BROTHERS Stevie and Aaron McKenna have their angles covered as they strive for boxing glory.

Their former publicist Richard Maynard says that although they are not the loudest men in the room, they have enough about them to bring in eyeballs.

He said: "The two broth-

By **KEVIN BYRNE**

ers was a great story, and they're always up to something outside the boxing ring, in their down time from training.

"They're horse riding, going out sailing, it's perfect for a tabloid!"

"All that stuff is key. You're looking for stories

and angles and something different but you need something else to make it all bigger.

"I can see these guys going to the top."

"Stevie is a monster puncher, so exciting, and the same with Aaron."

"In a few years' time these guys are going to be ruling their division."



NEIGH BOTHER
... Stevie and Aaron McKenna love horse riding