

By SIMON MAGUIRE

ANDY FARRELL believes this summer's tour of New Zealand will be harder than any World

Cup campaign.

And the Ireland head coach is planning on using the experience to see who will handle the heat - and who will fall by the wayside.

Farrell has named a 40-man small for the trin which

will fall by the wayside.

Farrell has named a 40-man squad for the trip which includes five uncapped players.

Leinster's Joe McCarthy, Jimmy O'Brien and Ciarán Frawley join Munster's Jeremy Loughman and Connacht's Cian Prendergast as the new faces in the squad.

Ireland face the mighty All Blacks in three Tests — with two midweek clashes against the Maori also scheduled.

It is one of the most testing tours an Irish side will ever undertake and Farrell is well aware of the challenge ahead.

He said: "Along with the staff, there are 70 of us going on this tour — the biggest tour Ireland's ever done.

"It will need the energy, the cohesive energy, of all 70 to make this happen the way that we want it to happen.

"Because, if two or three don't believe — we're not writing the historic report that we want to write.

"In that regard it's brilliant. We're just finding out more

want to write.

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We're just finding out more about ourselves."

Farrell (right) sees the challenge as the ideal preparation for next year's Rugby World Cup in France — given the difficulty be is expecting from he is expecting from the team's hosts this

summer. He said: "When it comes to the World Cup - I reckon we Cup - 1 need 40-plus play-ers who are good

Faz upbeat on priceless trip

enough to play in knockout

rugby stages.
"I'm talking quarter-final, semi-final and final.
"We know who those teams could be in the quarter-final and we need to find out about ourselves. Therefore, we can't ourselves. Therefore, we can't lose. "Some "Some

se.
"Some guys on this tour will fail by the wayside. Some guys on this tour will flourish that we didn't think would flourish because of the extreme pressure.

pressure.
"I have no doubt some guys who didn't make the tour will have an unbelievable pre-season and start next season with bang a

before and got on the end of a good hiding on the back of it. "Again, it's priceless for us to find out more about ourselves and find out who is going to front up and who is going to perform at a level that probably they didn't think they could perform at and that's what we're after pushing the boundaries.

pushing the boundaries.
"We all know what's com-

work their way back into this but we'll find a hell of a lot out about ourselves on this tour and that's why it's priceless to us."

Farrell's side beat New Zealand last November and he is expecting the Kiwis to come out swinging in July.

He added: "We expect them to be at their best — like we always do. We've beaten them before and got on the end of a good hiding on the back of it.

international season.
"There's no harder place to go in world rugby than New Zealand. If you look at the five games that we've got does it get any harder? Is the World Cup harder than that?
"I don't know - I suppose we'll see on the road. This is what we're facing and unless we meet that challenge

meet that challenge head-on, then it's going to be a tough old tour."

Serena but I don't believe it.

SERENA WILLIAMS is heading back Wimbledon after landing a wildcard at the age of 40.

The seven-time SWI9 champion will make a shock return in her first

competitive singles match in a year.

US ace Williams with-drew from last year's tournament after tearing her hamstring her hamstring against Aliaksan-

dra Sasnovich on Centre Court. She has fallen to world No 1,208 due to inactivity –

due to inactivitybut there was
never any doubt
someone of her
stature would be
on the initial
wildcard list.
And All England Club
chiefs had to bring forward the announcement
by a day after Williams
broke the news to her 15
million followers on
Instagram.

Instagram.
The 23-time Grand
Slam singles champ
posted a pic of her white
Nike trainers on a grass

By ROB MAUL

court and said: "SW and SW19. It's a date. See you there. Let's go."

US Open champ Emma Raducanu, 19, will be seeded in the first round and, if the draw is unkind, she could face Williams (below),

Williams will appear at Eastbourne International next week — but only in doubles action alongside Tunisian world No4 Ons Jabeur.

The icon's last Major triumph was the 2017 Australian Open — before she gave birth to daughter Olympia — and she has lost in four Slam finals since then.

then.

then.

THE US Open will not follow Wimbledon in banning Russian and Belarusian players.

This means Moscowborn ace Daniil Medvedev - the world No1 - will be able to defend his men's title in New York from August 29. from August 29.

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