

Dublin rose 'over the rainbow' as she prepares to bloom in Tralee

By Isabel Hurley

THIS IS the young Dublin woman carrying the hopes of the capital in this year's Rose of Tralee competition.

Gorgeous Aoife Judge (21) saw off 49 other hopefuls to take the title of Dublin Rose at a massive function in Clontarf Castle.

"I am thrilled and honoured to have the privilege to have the title of Dublin Rose for a year and I intend to do the best I can and do the city proud.

"It's still sinking in really. It was a great night. There was a huge crowd of about 450 people there.

"I was sponsored by the Porter House and I sang Eva Cassidy's song "Over the Rainbow," said Aoife of last week's event.

As a child, Aoife spent happy summers up in Donegal where her late grandmother, Helena Doherty, was a huge fan of the Rose of Tralee.

"She always wanted one of her grandchildren to be in the Rose of Tralee. We never had any relations or friends in the contest before but I always wanted to do it myself.

"It's a dream come true that



BLOOMING: Dublin Rose Aoife Judge is looking forward to the competition in Tralee

I am actually going to be in it. We are all very excited," said Aoife who has just graduated from UCD with a degree in History and Politics.

Aoife is the daughter of Jim and Geraldine Judge and is the eldest of three children, Claire

(19) and Conor (17). Her boyfriend is Phillip Allwright but in keeping with Rose of Tralee rules, he won't be her escort on the big night.

Aoife's dress will be designed by Anne Gregory and all of the Rose of Tralee contestants are

sponsored by Newbridge Silver.

"It's going to be a very busy time. All the Roses were brought down to Tralee last week for a photo shoot for VIP Magazine.

Then I will be at the Dublin Horse Show before going to Kerry for the start of the Roses' Tour of Ireland.

MASSIVE

That starts on August 13 and we go all around the country before arriving back in Tralee on August 17 for the Rose Ball in the Dome," said Aoife.

The Rose of Tralee is televised over two nights and attracts massive audience ratings.

This year there is a total of 31 Roses competing from all parts of the world.

As the Dublin Rose, Aoife will be doing her best to bring the title home.

"Obviously I will do the very best I can. It will be a great experience. Everyone tells me that the week is just brilliant. I am really looking forward to it and want to thank everyone who supported me," said Aoife.

Aoife — we wish you the very best of luck!



FINE VOICE: Aoife sang Over The Rainbow as she won the Dublin Rose title in Clontarf Castle

RIVALS ARE ALL ROSY AS JUDGEMENT DAY NEARS

Beaten babes ready to back Aoife

THIS year's Dublin Rose Aoife Judge is packing more than just beauty in her vanity case as she heads to the Tralee festival.

The beauty was so popular with other Rose of Tralee contestants that 14 out of the 20 girls she competed against to clinch the title are going to support her in the final in Co Kerry.

The recent UCD graduate was crowned the Dublin Rose in Clontarf Castle earlier this month after achieving a degree in history and politics.

Cover

Out of the 31 Roses competing this year, Aoife was one of nine lucky Irish Roses to represent her county.

Gracing the cover of the next issue of VIP Magazine, Aoife said the festival is "something I've always wanted to get involved in".

"It hasn't sunk in yet," she continued, "I think my granny would be proud," said Aoife.

"It's not just a beauty pageant, it's much deeper than that.

"The other Dublin Rose contestants are absolutely wonderful, we meet up for drinks and there are no hard feelings," explained Aoife.

■ By EVA MARIE GIBNEY

"We've even set up The Rosebud Ladies' Club which is just getting off the ground, and we hope the organisation will strengthen contacts between both national and international roses — and perhaps expand to even do charity work in the future."



POPULAR: Dublin Rose Aoife Judge is set for the Tralee final in Kerry

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