



AT COURT: Liam Dolan

€35k for garda 'knifed' on duty

A GARDA detective who was stabbed during his right eye during a Halloween disturbance has been awarded more than €35,000 in damages.

Det Garda Liam Dolan (53) told the High Court hearing that he was hit in the face after a group of youths ran at him in Clane, Co Kildare, in October 2010.

Mr Justice Bernard Barton was told that Det. Garda Dolan, a married father of three who was suing the State, had been "knifed on his cheekbone".

The court heard that Det Garda Dolan, from Carragh, Co Kildare, had suffered anxiety, flashbacks and sleep disturbance after the incident.

Scar

His barrister, Frank Crean, said his client was off work for several weeks following the attack.

His symptoms had now significantly reduced, although there "had not been a day when he had not thought about the incident".

The court heard the wound had left a visible scar on Det Garda Dolan's face.

The State argued that Det. Garda Dolan's quality of life had not been adversely impaired after the attack.

Awarding €35,780 damages, the judge said he accepted Det Garda Dolan had suffered minor psychological injuries.

Ruling in favour of father

A WOMAN whose son was taken from her after social workers raised concerns about drinking has lost a family court fight over the youngster.

The boy, now 13, had been placed in the care of his father in Dublin by a judge four years ago after a court heard that the woman had an "inappropriate tendency" to "turn to alcohol".

But the teenager had refused to return to Ireland after visiting his mother in London.

Judge Peter Singer of the High Court in London has ruled he must return.



GOOD NEWS: Irish Daily Star Editor Des Gibson with overall winner Emma Flanagan from Our Lady's College in Drogheda as well as Emma's mother Maura Flanagan and Emma's teacher Mona Ni Mhurchu at the NewsBrands Ireland Press Pass Awards



COMMENTS: Broadcaster Matt Cooper speaking at the NewsBrands Ireland Press Pass Awards in Dublin yesterday

BUDDING TALENTS PRESS THEIR CASE

RADIO presenter Matt Cooper handed out awards to the next generation of Irish journalists yesterday — and stressed that a free press is critical to our democracy.

Cooper made the comments as he presented the Press Pass student media awards at Dublin's Convention Centre yesterday.

Emma Flanagan from Our Lady's College in Drogheda was crowned the overall winner out of over 7,500 students who took part in the Transition Year journalism project.

Conor SHEILS

Cooper (50) spoke of his admiration for the Irish newspaper industry as he blasted the lack of free media in North Korea and other dictatorships.

He said: "I think we are very fortunate here in Ireland.

"What happened in North Korea has happened in many places and there are still supposedly democratic countries in the world where there has been a clampdown on the media.

"There are flaws in mainstream media but I think that, much like democracy, it is the least worst option we've got."

Cooper has previously visited North Korea in order to carry out research for a book on life inside the dictatorship.

Fears

Meanwhile, the outspoken presenter also told of his fears about the possibility of Donald Trump gaining a foothold in US politics.

He said: "During the election campaign [in Ireland] we talked about how dull it was but I would rather have a dull election campaign than a Trump-like figure in Irish politics.

"The thing about our politics is that we don't have people with deliberately extreme or deliberately provocative viewpoints.

"Clearly we haven't had a Trump-style figure coming forward in Ireland and I think the Irish reaction would be pretty visceral in dislike of somebody like that."

'MUM CHOKED SON TILL HE PASSED OUT'

● Court told of chilling abuse and maggots around rotting food : ● Teen made to do a handstand while he was nursing broken arm

A TEENAGE boy was choked so hard by his mother that he passed out, Ennis Family Court has heard.

The boy also looked up how he could remove a cast from his arm after his abusive mother refused to accept that his injury was serious.

Social worker for the Child and Family Agency (CFA)

Mary Sheehan outlined in court how the boy passed out when he was choked.

Ms Sheehan also said that on another occasion a

Gordon DEEGAN

brother of the teen, aged under five, was left gulping for air after their mother shoved his head into a pillow.

On the teen googling how to remove his cast, Ms Sheehan said that the teen sustained a broken arm and was hospitalised for a number of days after emergency surgery.

However, Ms Sheehan said that the boy's mother did not visit him while he was in hospital and asked him to move

furniture and do a handstand while recovering from the injury.

Ms Sheehan was speaking during an application by the CFA to amend a supervision order that the woman have only one-hour supervised access of her three children under 18 each week.

The woman had enjoyed shared access of the children with her estranged husband since last July to late last month.

Supervised

However, the CFA made an emergency move last month that the woman have only supervised access to the children and that regime has been in place for the past three weeks with the agency now seeking a court order confirming the new access arrangements.

This followed gardai making available last month transcripts of specialist interviews with two of the young children that outlined specific allegations against their mother.

Ms Sheehan said: "I have to say in 31 years of social work, I was absolutely horrified about what I read. The details of the children's allegations were chilling."

The teen boy is not subject to the court order as he is over 18 and he has left the family home.

Ms Sheehan said: "There would be a food shop every three weeks — there wouldn't be enough food for school lunches. There were maggots around decaying food."

The court-appointed guardian ad litem for the three children who speaks on their behalf, David Foley, told the court that the children are quite happy with the current arrangement of living with their father and supervised access with their mother.

Judge Grainne O'Neill granted supervised one-hour access per week and adjourned the case for mention to May 19.



ABUSE CASE: Ennis Courthouse