

Limerick

AN TOSTAL CELEBRATIONS

As Ireland's An Tostal celebrations draw to a close, Limerick puts on one of the biggest parades ever staged in the City. Leading the great cavalcade are the County Limerick and the County Clare Hunts.

Now come spectacular floats, most of them designed and built in Limerick by local sporting clubs. Thousands pack the streets to see the cavalcade. From a balcony, the Mayor of Limerick and Mr. Boland, Minister of Justice, watch the procession. Ingenuity, colour, pageantry and humour - all are combined in this great An Tostal parade.

Behind the main procession of sports tableaux, comes a float, garlanded with flowers, bearing Miss An Tostal of 1953 complete with harp. Now comes the footbeagling and coursing section.

Bringing up the rear come the old crocks - as well as the new - to end the greatest carnival parade Limerick has ever seen. Edward Street is the scene of another An Tostal event: the soap box derby, so, if you think you know the winner, the gang's all here to prove you wrong.

They're all in line, so the Mayor, Mr. Bradshaw, drops the flag - and away they go. Hope your money's on number one - just look at him!

Off goes another batch. There are eighteen races altogether with special awards in the children's class, the Commercial Class and the Grand Prix class - so everybody's got a chance.

Girls as well as boys try their skill in the derby - and by the way, it doesn't matter if you can't afford one of those super-streamlined models, four wheels and a box is all you need - after all they all go the same way home.

So successful was the An Tostal Derby, that Limerick's already planning another for next year.