

Drunken wager lands Marc centre stage

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THIS summer will see Irishman Marc Hogan undertake the challenge of performing at the internationally renowned Edinburgh Festival — all thanks to a £1 drunken bet.

The corporate communications speaker from Co. Wicklow explained: “Last year, when I was giving a talk to a business audience, one of my friends and fellow motivational speakers told me that I was quite funny and this led to him challenging me to write and perform a comedy show.

“I thought he meant at an open mic night at a local comedy club, but no — he raised the bar to perform at the Edinburgh Festival!”

He added: “I had a think about it for a while and decided, what the hell? What exactly have I got to lose? I don’t want to look back in 30 years and wonder why I let that opportunity pass me by.”

Being told that he would never be able to write and practice a show in 11 months — it usually takes professional comedians three years to be able to perform at the festival — spurred Hogan on.

He also enrolled on a comedy course to learn the skills of the trade.

“I have a new respect for comedians,” he admitted. “It takes almost 70 hours of writing to produce a one-hour show. The professionals make it look like they are just up on stage having a chat but it’s all rehearsed and practised.”

Whilst everyone is interested in what he is doing the reaction of friends and family has been somewhat divided.

“Some people think that I’m brave for doing it, but then others think that I am insane,” he said. “Some days I feel the same — I think I can do this, but on the bad days I think what have I got myself into!”

The first-time comedian is finding that the Irish tradition of storytelling is helping him prepare for his show which will see him telling yarns about his childhood, his journey throughout the challenge and randomly being attacked by a swan!

He said: “I hope that my Irish charm will win the audience over and that people like the show. Even though I will probably be feeling sick to the stomach and incredibly nervous I’m just going to go out on stage and enjoy the experience.”

■ Marc Hogan’s Actions Speak Louder Than Birds will be appearing at Zoo Southside, 117 Nicholson Street, Edinburgh, from August 7–30. Contact 0131 662 6892 or visit www.zoofestival.co.uk for tickets.