

THE IRISH MAIL ON SUNDAY

6.6.2021

MAGAZINE

Rosanna Davison
in her first
modelling
shoot since
having
twins

INCLUDING
TV Week
34-PAGES OF
TV LISTINGS

Back to work

At home with the Quirkies

'I kept fit so I could lift the babies'

DOTING GRAN: Rosanna with her mum Diane and Sophia

WHEN Rosanna Davison became pregnant last year after a series of heart-breaking miscarriages, she was naturally filled with concern. But as her pregnancy progressed her worry turned to joy, then shock when informed that she was carrying twin boys.

After coming to terms with that surprise, choosing the perfect names was the next welcome challenge. Family and friends chipped in with their own suggestions — some to comic effect.

'Damo and Ivor was quite popular but that was already taken,' laughs Rosanna at the recollection of what was clearly a cheeky suggestion from her brother-in-law Andy Quirke.

'We were trying to find names that went well together and suited them but that didn't rhyme. We had so many suggestions for twin names like Brian and Ryan.'

'Oscar is my mum's grandfather so that came from her side, that was her suggestion. Hugo, we just really like the name and it really suits him, we thought together they're quite nice. They're not gimmicky twin names. We didn't tell anyone until they were born what we had chosen,' she says.

For former Miss World Rosanna, carrying a pregnancy to full term had been the source of utter heartache and despair as she had suffered 13 miscarriages.

But in 2019 the couple welcomed a little girl, Sophia, who was born by surrogacy and they had been planning on growing their family using a surrogate again when

Model Rosanna Davison wished for a baby and got three! She tells **Niamh Walsh** how her life has changed utterly, but she wouldn't have it any other way

Rosanna found herself pregnant.

'It was a total surprise, we never thought it would happen for us. We were ready to go down the surrogacy route again. There's no medical or scientific explanation.

'But that's what is so mysterious about pregnancy, I think, in pregnancy and pregnancy loss. We can know as much as we can scientifically, but the human body is a mystery. I suppose I wasn't overly

excited because we had been in that position before. I am cautious enough now, just wait and see what happens. It probably took me a long time during the pregnancy to think that it might actually happen. They say the first week of viability for a foetus is 24 weeks so I probably got to 28 weeks before I started thinking "Okay, this might actually happen".

'It did take a while. When you have been

through pregnancy loss - as so many women have and it's great that it's been talked about more - I think you have that element of caution and that element of excitement, which unfortunately means that it's hard to enjoy the pregnancy. Although I found I was more anxious when Sophia was on the way than with the boys, but I think that's just I was more in control with the boys and I knew how I was feeling every day and I

HOW ROSANNA KEPT HER GLOW IN PREGNANCY

Rosanna was positively glowing as she got back into her model groove with a shoot for TanOrganic.

An advocate of the vegan lifestyle, Rosanna has long since been a lover of the natural way of life. So teaming up with the all-natural brand fit like the perfect tanning mitt.

She told *Magazine* that before, during and after pregnancy TanOrganic offerings are her go-to pamper-perfect products.

'During my pregnancy I used the multi-use dry oil on my bump every day, three times a day. I didn't get stretch marks. I don't know if that's connected to the oil or it's just my skin or genetics or luck. But it definitely kept my skin soft. During pregnancy I wore the tan once a week. It just gives you a boost and I've kept up the tan once a week. It makes your skin smoother, softer. The whole

range is just luxurious.'

TanOrganic is set to launch a rebrand with a revamped new logo.

On top of the rebrand later this month, for every bottle sold Tan Organic will remove a pound of plastic from the earth's oceans. Tan Organic brand founder and creator Noelle O'Connor explained: 'Our mission is to make a real impact by spreading kindness and giving back to the planet with every product we make. TanOrganic aim to be the world leader in safe, sunless tanning, recommended by dermatologists and distributed in retail outlets worldwide, including pharmacies, drugstores, e-retailers and our online stores. We want to change the world for all. TanKind, one golden glow at a time'.

Check out TanOrganic.com to shop the full range. It's also available to buy from Boots and leading pharmacies.



CONFIDENT: Rosanna was happy to get back in front of the camera again



PLAYTIME: Babies Hugo and Oscar arrived last November, almost a year to the day after their big sister Sophia

could feel their movement and I knew I felt well. Whereas when Sophia was on the way she was in a different country thousands of miles away and I didn't know how the mum was feeling, so there is that different element of being in control.'

Rosanna credits her unexpected successful pregnancy to simply relaxing into life.

'Personally I think relaxing during lockdown helped. I think for everybody, we've all realised the importance of slowing down and taking more time out, not rushing around.'

'The amount of people I have talked to who have said even if things go back to normal they are going to try and not take on as much as before and not live life as fast paced as they have before... I've realised we're more happy with the simple things. Wes and I love going to the park and watching Sophia run around.'

'We obviously haven't been to restaurants in so long that we really appreciate a take-away on a Friday night or a glass of wine at the weekends. Just being able to sit outside with friends was amazing.'

All the launches and events that we used to go to have been stressful. I can't see myself going out and socialising any time soon. I'd say it will be a few years before I'm out and about.'

Wes and Rosanna's relaxation has now descended into chaos of the welcome kind as their days are spent looking after three tots under the age of two.

'It's getting slightly easier each month that passes, they are sleep-

ing better now. Although we are in the depths of teething, Sophia is teething on and off and the boys are demented with teething, they are cutting their first teeth at the moment.'

'The age difference is three days under a year. So for three days every year they will all be the same age. They are best pals. Sophia took a little time to get used to the fact they are here to stay, but she comes up to them now and cuddles them and kisses them. She chats to them, and now they are smiling and responding and reacting to her, so she loves that. I can't wait until later in the year when the boys can play with

'I can't see myself going out any time soon'

her more and even when they start crawling and walking. It will be crazy, it's already crazy.'

The easing of restrictions and the vaccine rollout has meant euphoria for grannies and grandads the world over as they can now meet their grandchildren. And Rosanna says her father, international superstar Chris de Burgh, is grasping every bit of his new-found freedom with jaunts to supermarkets on his post lockdown wish-list.

'Like everyone else we didn't see my parents, we didn't see anyone for a long time last year when we were in lockdown. So we are grateful that we can see family now.'

'It has given my parents such a

lease of life just to have the little bit of freedom. My dad, like everyone else, was so scared to expose himself in the supermarket or to go out and risk getting sick. Now he's able to go out to Tesco's or Supervalu — any supermarket he can get to — and he loves that freedom. My mum is over pretty much every day or half the day and she loves that.

'She has waited years to have grandchildren so she just loves coming over and seeing them and taking them to the park.'

'Then at the weekend we are able you go to their house so it is really nice family time that under normal circumstances we would never have had. My dad has always travelled a lot of the year with work and my mam goes with him, so it was nice to have that time we wouldn't have had. You get used to Dad travelling so the idea of being out and about and travelling again seems strange.'

Chris's audience is also now slightly younger than usual.

'My dad does sing to them, the boys are musical — they love music and songs and really respond to singing. He just sings whatever comes into his head,' she laughs.

Rosanna's mother Diane and Wesley's mother have also taken to their grandparent duties with Rosanna even being chucked out of her own home by her well-meaning mum.

'My mam would come over and send Wesley and I out for a walk for even 20 minutes because there were days I didn't leave the house. To look after yourself as a mam or a dad is so important.'

While Rosanna has bounced back into shape and is back in front of the cameras for her first post-pregnancy shoot, she says that being a model mum comes with the same insecurities, challenges and dire hair days as mums the world over.

But swapping her baggy comfies for her mum undies, Rosanna says she was delighted to be back at work for her shoot for Tan Organic tan.

'I actually felt fine doing the shoot. I'm doing it so long I felt comfortable enough. The interesting part was that getting back to normal or looking or feeling like myself again was low down on my list of priorities after having the boys. In the first month or so after the birth you're obviously left with a post-pregnancy bump and your uterus takes a while to shrink back

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down. It was the depths of winter so I was still in my maternity clothes, and my big baggy hoodies.

'We were so busy and so sleep deprived that for the first six weeks or so I didn't even look at myself. It got to Christmas so I thought I would put on a dress for Christmas Day and I was able to zip it up so that was nice. Throughout my pregnancy I did keep training and I did keep fit because carrying around a twin bump and carrying around a baby I needed to be strong.

'I was keen to keep fit and strong throughout. Once I had the go ahead from my doctor I was keen to get back walking and doing Pilates because I am used to being fit. As I've discovered, you need to be strong with babies — there is so much lifting involved. I've found that just being active has helped get my fitness back. So because of that I felt comfortable doing the shoot.'

Rosanna may be back at work but she says for hubby Wesley, who runs Dr Quirkey's Emporium, being at home has been both a blessing and curse of coronavirus.

'The man in the situation is maybe expected to carry the emotions and support their partner but they are going through as

'Being active has helped me get my fitness back'

much the woman does, so it's important to think of the men too. Overall, I suppose he has enjoyed his time at home — although like everyone he wished it was under different circumstances.

'But it's been incredibly difficult for any business owner to have to close their business. There's an awful lot of stress involved from the financial perspective, and you are concerned for your staff.

'When you have staff that have been with you for years or even decades you are concerned for their wellbeing. So it's definitely had its stresses but for the most part he has enjoyed being at home with the family.

'We really enjoyed our time with Sophia last year and now that she has two little brothers and our time is a little bit more split we are so grateful that we had that one-on-one time with her last year.'

Car fanatic Wesley has also clearly been inducting his boys into the racier side of buggy life.

'They love the bumps when they're out in the pushchair and then they love when they come home for their nap. During the day they tend to go for naps at the same time so when they're napping Sophia will have her lunch so it's a bit of a juggling act. Our mums have been great, they mind them or take them to the park. It's been crazy but we love it, we were under no illusion that it would be easy.'

Rosanna says she hopes other couple



PARK LIFE: Sophia is now on the move, which means a lot of dashing around for her mum and dad



BUSY BUGGIES: Rosanna needs both hands for Sophia's pushchair and the twin pram for the boys



GENERATION GAME: Rosanna introduces her boys to their great grandmother Maeve



FAMILY: Little Sophia checks out her baby brothers Hugo and Oscar

facing the same journey to parenthood will take some comfort from their success.

'I get lots of emails still just asking about surrogacy and how we started the process and the first steps we took, and I would always say each situation is different, medically, legally; you need to check where you stand and what your rights are.

'So I would always say to people to get yourself a lawyer that specialises in surrogacy in Ireland and abroad. Talk to your doctor and get an understanding of what is involved in terms of your medical circumstances as it relates to surrogacy.

'There is so much involved in both the legal side and the medical side and each situation is different. I can only share our experience and our story and we were lucky enough that overall we had a very positive experience and obviously it worked.

'But I am very aware that many people go through years of IVF attempts and surrogacy attempts and it is just a tough, stressful experience for so many people. I

hate the idea that people are going through what we went through and maybe haven't reached the end of their journey and don't know if they ever will. I think when we were going through it I would love to have

'It's a cliché but they do grow up so fast'

heard our story and think "oh, well, if it worked out for them it might work out for us too." I had heard about couples who did have consecutive losses.

'So I think hearing those stories can be really important. Your doctor can give you all the advice and encouraging words in the

world but when you hear real life stories, it's the real life, real situations you want to hear about.'

With three tots in the house, Rosanna is taking her foot off the gas as she enjoys this most special of times.

'At the moment it's nice having this time off. I've worked since I was in my teens. I did enjoy doing the documentary with Sile Seoige.

'Career-wise, I'm lucky enough to work with some great brands and it's nice to be able to work from home and be home and give my time to the three babies. It's a cliché, but they do grow up so fast so I want to be here for them for this year, and next year and obviously for the rest of my life.'

As to whether there is room for a fourth little Quirkey, she says 'never say never'.

'I think for now they are so young and so close in age that our hands are full. We don't have forever left but we have a few years, so you never know... but for now we have our hands full.'

Former Ireland AM star Sinéad Desmond wins the first round in her legal battle for wage parity

EXCLUSIVE

By **Niamh Walsh**

GROUP SHOWBUSINESS EDITOR

SINÉAD DESMOND has won the first round against her former employer Virgin Media in her fight for equal pay, the Irish Mail on Sunday can reveal.

A decision published by the Workplace Relations Commission is an indicator that the case is poised to be a legal brawl pitting broadcaster against broadcaster, with 'star power' as well as the gender pay gap at the core of the contentious case.

Ms Desmond was a co-presenter on Virgin Media's flagship breakfast show Ireland AM. In 2017 she abruptly departed the station, then known as TV3, as bosses refused to entertain her claim for pay parity in line with her co-presenters.

The news of her shock exit, which the MoS exclusively revealed, sent shockwaves through the industry as she instigated an equality case to pursue her claim.

In a robust defence to Ms Desmond's claim, Virgin Media said it was a case of 'star power' and national profile and not gender that determined salary.

Virgin challenged Ms Desmond's claim for equal pay with co-presenter Mark Cagney, saying any disparity was not gender based. They pointed to Mr Cagney's 'star quality' and 'established national profile'

Desmond had demonstrated her own 'star power'

following his involvement in the flagship programme since its inception.

The WRC heard from Virgin lawyers that Mr Cagney – referred to in the ruling as Mr X – was the show's 'star anchor' and given his public presence and history nobody else could have performed his role with the same effect.

They said by virtue of being a bigger star it 'put him in a position of considerable commercial advantage in his negotiations with the broadcaster' and also that he had been with the show 'since its inception'.

Ms Desmond hit back, pointing out that she worked for 'numerous charities' and attended social engagements for 'personal reward' which demonstrated her own 'star power'.

She also claimed she had been contacted by commercial organisations asking her to 'star' in campaigns and advertisements but was refused permission. Over time, she stopped seeking permission and accepted jobs her agent secured for her. This was never questioned, she claimed.

Her legal team argued that the 'industry is a fickle business and if a media figure ceases to be appealing to the general public s/he cannot expect to remain in a particular business'. They argued that 'a person's history is of far less relevance than their current popularity / whilst track record is relevant ... public tolerance and patience are at a premium.

'In any event [Ms Desmond's] own record and that of Mr X were substantial enough to reduce any great differential between them.'

Virgin also pointed out that Ms Desmond was an employee since 2006 while Mr Cagney was engaged on foot of an independent commercial contract negotiated at 'arm's length' through a registered company (which is industry standard) and as such was not a 'valid comparator' for the purposes of an equal pay claim.

Had Ms Desmond not been able to prove otherwise, her claim would have failed at the first hurdle.

However, having gone through a number of employment law 'control tests', the WRC

Ruling: You can compare your pay to 'star' Mark Cagney



ON SCREEN: Desmond and Cagney sharing laughs with each other on the set of Ireland AM's breakfast show



ended last year. Speaking to the MoS previously, he said he had not seen or heard from Ms Desmond since 2017 and 'she walked away without saying farewell to her couch colleagues of over a decade'.

He revealed that the breakfast team only found out Ms Desmond had quit when the media broke the story.

Ms Desmond is understood to have felt that she was left with 'no option' other than to quit after management refused to entertain her claim for equal pay.

She has disappeared from the public eye since she quit the Ireland AM couch in 2017.

A spokesperson for her said yesterday: 'As the case is still ongoing, Sinéad Desmond cannot give any comment. But she would like to thank Ireland AM viewers for their continued support in her case against Virgin Media. It means a great deal to her.'

Gender pay balance has been a thorny issue among top presenters at Virgin and RTÉ for the past few years. The final outcome of Ms Desmond's claim at the WRC will be watched with interest by the mandarins at Ballymount and Montrose.

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PROFILE: Sinéad Desmond said she was asked to front campaigns for various products such as her status