

BABY JOY FOR RHYS MEYERS

They are loved up and can't wait for their tot

Over the moon... smitten couple Mara and Jonathan are delighted with their baby news



Horizontal hugs... Rhys Meyers embraces Natalie Dormer in *The Tudors*



JONATHAN Rhys Meyers' partner is having a baby, we can reveal.

Beautiful Mara Lane is about 28 weeks pregnant and the couple are over the moon about the news, the Irish Sun has learned.

A source said: "They are both delighted and can't wait for the arrival of a tiny tot into their lives. They are very loved up and are so excited."

The couple got engaged in 2014 and it is believed they may even have secretly tied the knot in

EXCLUSIVE by **KEN SWEENEY**
Showbiz Editor

recent times. It was revealed this week that Mara changed the name of her Instagram page – which she shared with dog Toca – to 'Lane Rhys Meyers'.

Jonathan posed for a photoshoot with a gold band on his wedding finger back in June.

He was also spotted wearing the same gold band in a picture on Mara's Instagram page.

And, in a post five months ago, the actress and producer wrote: "Thank you for my Mother's Day

flowers best Hubby, J." Last month, Jonathan was among those who paid their respects at the funeral of 'Batman' Ben Farrell who died last month after losing his battle against cancer.

The Dublin youngster, five, was diagnosed with an aggressive tumour last Christmas Eve.

The Tudors star had met the lad on the set of TV show Vikings.

Rhys Meyers has publicly battled demons for years, and had been living clean since 2011 until May 2015 when he suffered a setback.

The thespian was pictured swigging vodka from the bottle in a London street and in a dishevelled

state with bloodshot eyes and his fly open. He later issued a statement apologising for the "minor relapse", telling fans: "Mara and I are thankful for your support and kindness during this time."

"I apologise for having a minor relapse and hope that people don't think too badly of me."

Since then he has been spotted enjoying life – without the booze – with his partner, Mara.

And at the beginning of the year they were seen going to a doctor's surgery in Beverly Hills together.

The Irish star appeared in several films, including Michael Collins, before making his big

break in the UK hit Bend It Like Beckham. But he is best known for his role as King Henry VIII in the Irish-shot series *The Tudors*.

Jonathan has faced rehab up to six times in the past. He first went to the famous Promises facility in Malibu in May 2005.

He also faced charges after several incidents while under the influence of alcohol, including being arrested in Dublin Airport in 2007 for being drunk and in breach of the peace.

In 2010, he was barred from ever flying with United Airlines again after he drunkenly abused a member of staff in JFK Airport.

TOUT ROW OVER ED'S CHARITY GIG

A WEBSITE was blasted yesterday for touting charity tickets to an Ed Sheeran child cancer concert for up to €6,000. Viagogo was accused of repugnance over next month's sold-out gig in London in aid of the Teenage Cancer Trust. Tickets had originally cost around €90. The charity raged: "The only people who should profit from Teenage Cancer Trust at the Royal Albert Hall are young people with cancer." It insisted that buyers' identification will be "rigorously checked" at the event and anyone caught with sec-



Tickets... Ed

By NEIL SYSON

ondary tickets will be refused entry. However, a statement on Viagogo's website said "buyers of tickets for this event will be accompanied into the venue by the seller". Anti-touting campaigners Fan Fair Alliance said: "Not only are Viagogo encouraging touts to sell these tickets at vastly inflated prices, none of which goes back to the charity, they attempt to circumvent the terms and conditions by advertising that the buyer will be accompanied into the venue by the seller." Viagogo did not comment.

Punters pay €22m

IRISH punters spent €22m at one of the UK's biggest horse racing events last year, a new study claims. The research by the University of Gloucestershire shows almost one in three tickets for the Cheltenham Festival are purchased by Irish racegoers. A crowd of more than 260,000 attends the festival annually which kicks off on March 14 next.

GROUND FORCE

Locals in a Co Kerry village have threatened to lie on a road to stop a works contractor throwing rubble and soil on it.

KEITH FIRES



Boyzone rivals... Westlife on stage

By KEN SWEENEY, Showbiz Editor

KEITH Duffy has launched a blistering attack on "arrogant" boybanders Kian Egan and Nicky Byrne, insisting: "They think they're Bob Dylan."

The former Boyzone hunk dismissed the pair as average and egotistical, outshone in Westlife by the talented Shane Filan and Mark Feehily.

The 42-year-old hit back after negative comments from Kian and Nicky about Keith's sold-out Boyzlife shows with ex-Westlife singer Brian McFadden.

As Boyzlife return with a string of dates around Ireland, in which they perform Boyzone and Westlife hits, Keith's explosive comments mark the most bitter ever traded between members of Boyzone and Westlife.

He told the Irish Sun: "I don't care what Kian and Nicky think about Boyzlife. Both of them take themselves way too seriously and have big egos."

Shane Filan and Mark Feehily were the great singers in Westlife and Kian and Nick weren't, but they go on as though they were brilliant. Westlife take themselves way too seriously.

"Both Boyzone and Westlife played to screaming girls, we were pop bands. While myself and Brian acknowledge that, Kian and Nicky think they are Bob Dylan and U2, singing songs about humanity and saving the world."

"They need to chill out and start enjoying themselves. Keith claims himself and partner Brian have at all times remained grounded and in touch with the fans who made them famous."

He said: "There are lots of people in this business who've been as successful as we are but remain as grounded. You don't have to look too far to find fellas with massive egos and massive pride."

"That to me just gets in the way of us being human. We were all just ordinary blokes in Boyzone and Westlife."

Keith admits that neither himself nor Brian talk to the members of Westlife but predicts both Boyzone and Westlife could both hit the road next year with rival tours.

He said: "Westlife are 20 years together next year so I'm sure there's talk of them getting back together for that anniversary."

"It's the same for Boyzone, we've just signed a brand new deal with Warner Music for a new album and an arena tour."

Keith and Brian sit side by side in matching armchairs swapping stories in Boyzlife which comes to UCH Limerick on May 4 and Cork Opera House on May 5.

But the two men admit they might have been at war in the same boyband. Keith said: "As young men we would have been trying to outdo each other, we're too similar, whereas in Boyzlife, we can relax and go with the flow."

The actor and singer admits in between rehearsals he watched some of the latest season of Celebrity Big Brother, having appeared in the first series in 2001.

Keith said his jaw dropped watching the crazy rants of How Clean Is Your House star Kim Woodburn at fellow housemates. He said: "I have never met that woman and I hope I don't ever have to. The way she behaved towards the younger girls was disgraceful. How can someone of that age be so nasty and toxic?"

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Dad-of-two Keith admits he was their manager. They need someone with decades of experience to get them a new show on kids' TV."

Meanwhile, Keith and Brian want to turn their Boyzlife tour success into a risqué late-night telly show. Keith revealed: "It would have to be after-hours because you never know what Brian and myself would say to one another. We couldn't be trusted to keep it clean because we're trying to make each other laugh."

The pair have decided to skip the capital on their upcoming tour. Keith explained: "We haven't done gigs outside Dublin in years so these dates are exciting. Anyway Dublin is where we live, we come back from crazy shows in Newcastle or Aber-

BROADSIDE AT WESTLIFE DUO

GET A LIFE... YOU'RE NOT BOB DYLAN

- Kian and Nicky 'take themselves too seriously'
- Rival tours on cards for Westlife & Boyzone in 2018
- Duffy was 'disturbed' by Jedward's behaviour on CBB



'Arrogant'... Kian, left, and Nicky

'They need to chill out'... Keith takes aim at Westlifers Kian and Nicky

dean and it's great to be anonymous in Dublin." Asked what really makes him angry, his answer has nothing to do with Boyzone or Westlife. "The star said: "I met a man the other day whose daughter has MS. She needs stem-cell treatment in Mexico. Her dad is fundraising to get her to Mexico but when she comes back to Ireland, she will need medication and chemo for the following year. But her medical insurance won't pay for it because the operation in Mexico has yet to be approved in Ireland."

"This poor man and his family are desperately trying to find the money for the operation and her treatment

The Boyzlife gigs, we don't just do tours, we do corporate events. A cruise around the Mediterranean, the Galway Races. Our management do a fantastic job. "But I don't perform because I need the money, I love being on stage. If I do six weeks in a John B Keane play in Dublin, that might only be 600 or 700 quid a week, which wouldn't pay all my bills but what would I be doing? I have to be out working. I couldn't be sitting at home."

Boyzlife will be supported by Australian X Factor winner, and Home and Away star Samantha Jade on their Irish dates. More details at boyzlifetour.com.



Dynamic duo... Keith & Brian

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CELEB CHIEF EXCLUSIVE



CHER-ILL SPLIT HELL

SEE PAGE 15

**DYLAN:
 IT'S
 GAME
 OVER**

By **KEN SWEENEY**, Showbiz Editor
CELEBRITY chef Dylan McGrath today lays bare how he has lost his ability to taste food as he fights daily agony. The **Masterchef Ireland** star also reveals how he downed 14 pills a day to fight the chronic pain and paralysis that has left him four stone overweight. McGrath, 39, said: "I thought it was game over. The illness has taken away my sense of taste."
 Full Story — Pages Four and Five



Kitchen nightmare... Dylan fighting pain

EUROPA LEAGUE

DUNDALK.....	1
ZENIT.....	2
MAN UTD.....	4
FENERBAHCE....	1

SEE SUNSPORT

● **Can't taste** ● **Up 4 stone** ● **Endless pain**

McGRATH LIFTS LID ON HELL WITH BIZ, BACK AND TABLETS



Good friends . . . Dylan and Nick; below, chef Christine O'Sullivan



EXCLUSIVE by KEN SWEENEY
Showbiz Editor

CELEBRITY chef Dylan McGrath has admitted dark thoughts went through his head after his chronic back injury left him unable to taste food.

The Masterchef Ireland star suffered paralysis in his arm and leg following a back condition that left him hospitalised for months on end, downing numerous tablets a day, and four stone overweight.

Dylan told the Irish Sun: "The worst thing was the doctors didn't know what was wrong with me. I was screaming at the top of my voice with back pain I was feeling and that was on a daily basis."

"My whole arm was numb. I couldn't feel one whole side of my body. I was on 12-14 tablets that I had to take as the day went on. It was pure hell."

The chef added: "The pain was excruciating. I thought my life was over. When you're faced with something like this, all sorts of things go through your head. It affects you so much, it just robs you of your spirit. "But I am a resilient person. I fought this tooth and nail and I will continue to keep fighting."

Despite the agony he still suffers night and day, the Belfast man decided to go off painkillers because it robs him of the creativity he needs to be a top chef.

Dylan said: "I rely on the young chefs I have working for me because the illness has taken away my sense of taste. I'm a creative, artistic person and all that stopped. But since coming off the tablets that side of me is coming back."

As a star of TV's Masterchef, Dylan was one of the most famous cooks in Ireland and about to open his latest restaurant in May 2015 when his world fell apart.

He said: "I had problems with my back for years. It was really a time bomb waiting to happen."

"Overnight, I went from being an able-bodied person going to the gym three times a week to someone in the most incredible pain 24 hours a day."

Desperate to promote his latest venture, Dylan went on Brendan O'Connor's old Saturday night chat show heavily dosed with painkillers.

His rambling performance shocked the nation and prompted calls from friends and family.

Dylan said: "When I did Brendan's TV show, I was at my very worst. But I had to keep going because we had made a huge investment and I was responsible. I had to keep going and didn't stop pushing myself forward."

As a result, his condition worsened and Dylan found himself hospitalised and unable to move.

After a number of scans, doctors confirmed the former star of Gue-

I can't taste anything... I was on 14 pills a day.

rilla Gourmet was suffering from a nerve condition called Complex Regional Back Syndrome.

The diagnosis proved the most terrifying moment yet for the bed-ridden TV star.

Dylan said: "The doctors told me I could have this for the rest of my life. It was all shrouded in mystery. I felt so broken. I was listening to them unable to get out of bed."

"I couldn't eat anything. I was thinking 'this is it, my life is over'. I could never lead my team again, that I wouldn't heal from this." He admits that was when he was con-

sumed with dark thoughts. Dylan recalled: "When you're faced with something like that, all sorts of things go through your head. People who were less strong might have felt suicidal."

"But I guess perseverance is part of the human spirit. If you have been through dark periods before, you know you can come out the other side."

"What struck me, as well, is that so many people across Ireland suffer from chronic pain but they just keep going."

"What you have in your brain is

that it might be horrible now but things do get better. You have to keep trying."

Dylan's misery continued until November 2015 when he underwent surgery and was given a recovery time of six weeks.

However, things got worse and nerve damage became a problem, with the pain moving to his arm.

He recalled: "I couldn't move my arm for three months. That was terrifying."

After nine months in the Mater Private hospital, Dylan was finally discharged. He is still battling his

back problem and working with a hypnotherapist in an attempt to overcome his pain.

Dylan admits to being slightly embarrassed of his appearance, having gained weight, but as he sips tea in his acclaimed eaterie Rustic Stone, in Dublin, he is back in the business he loves.

Dylan said: "I've withdrawn, I don't go out. I can't go out for dinner because I can't taste anything and I don't want to meet people."

"The pain I have is still horrific but I have to go on. I stopped the painkillers because the tablets were



All sorts of thoughts can go through your head

The pain I have is horrific but I have to go on

Back in business . . . Dylan at his Rustic Stone restaurant as he struggles with chronic pain



Stellar career of kitchen master

1977
BORN in Dublin. Spent the first six years of his life growing up in Carlow before his family moved to the Falls Road in Belfast. As a teenager he studied at Portrush Catering School before going on to the Belfast Institute.

1998
HE landed his first job in the food industry at the Jury's Inn hotel in Belfast before moving on to Roscoff's — the only Michelin star restaurant in Northern Ireland at the time.

1999
A YOUNG McGrath soon left the Roscoff to join the team at Conrad Gallagher's Peacock Alley eatery in Dublin. He then jetted to the UK where he worked in the two Michelin stars restaurant L'Ortolan by John Burton Race in Reading.

2002
THE talented chef returned to Dublin to work in Aidan Byrne's Commons restaurant.

2003
HE was called back to the UK to work in Tim Aiken's new diner in Chelsea as head chef.

2006
McGRATH came back to Dublin to head up Mint restaurant, which was awarded a Michelin star in 2008.

2008
MADE his first appearance on TV in RTE's Guerrilla Gourmet cooking show before featuring in the fly-on-the-wall documentary The Pressure Cooker.

2010
DYLAN opened his own Rustic Stone restaurant in Dublin.

2011
McGRATH is announced as a judge on RTE's hit show Masterchef, which aired in September. It was around this time that the pain in his back began to torment him as he prepared to open his Fade Street restaurant in Dublin.

2015
THE chef reaches breaking point and goes under the knife in November after trying a range of different methods to clear up his aching back. Doctors told him it would take six weeks to recover after the operation. However things took a turn for the worse and nerve damage left him in pain every time he moved his arm.

Frying hard . . . Dylan