

Big Barra coup

CORK businessman *Barra O Tuama*, who swears that he has given up all active involvement in politics of either the Fianna Fail or Progressive Democrats persuasion, is way ahead of the posse when it comes to seizing business opportunities in the wake of the liberalisation of Eastern Europe.

For almost two years now Barra has been flitting between Cork and Moscow signing up some of Russia's top operatic stars to feature in his highly-regarded concerts in Dublin, Cork and other Irish cities. This spring, lying in bed recuperating from an operation, he pulled off his biggest coup yet.

He was watching on TV the BBC's Singer of the World Competition when he spotted a young Russian baritone called *Dmitri Hvorostovsky*. Within an hour there was a fax from Barra in the singer's Cardiff hotel bedroom offering him a tour of Ireland this spring. Dmitri accepted, went on to win the competition and he's one of the hottest properties in the opera world.

He'll be in Cork with *Virginia Kerr* and tenor *Arthur Davies* on February 4 and in the National Concert Hall in Dublin on the following Wednesday, February 7. So intense is the interest in this young man that the American news magazine *Newsweek* is sending their European correspondent from Germany to do an in-depth interview with him while he's in Dublin.



■ Sandy — live at Bad Bob's