Perhaps it is in keeping with the hue (blue is stronger than red) of our national government that Boylesports have given a complete makeover to the old Celtic Bookmakers Office on Rush Street, Castlebar. The deep blue of the building certainly stands out and even a further contrast is the Daz-white look of the office uniform, plus the dazzling white teeth of

certain staff members, and you have a spankingly clean and refreshing general appearance in the new-look building.
It was originally Meteor Bookmakers, but Pat Boland, a man who learned his psychic powers from reading the entrails of vultures when he worked for a few years in the Sahara Desert, felt the chill of the economic winds long in advance of them hitting our shores and he was up and gone on his camel just in time.

Celtic Bookmakers had one of their more profitable branches in Castlebar and fortunately they escaped the national crash which befell the company Ivan Yeats had built so painstakingly with his own funds and hard work.
Unfortunately, Ivan had more money than foresight, but then again how many of us saw this crash coming? Not I.
It was to the relief of a lot of businessmen, and indeed punters, that Boylesports decided to take over the Celtic premises and what a splendid revamp job they have done.
Everything is now there for the convenience of the customer - plush seating, wide screen televisions and a host of side attractions to help you win, or lose, your money.
Horse racing is only small part of what is generally termed as the gambling business is all about. You can bet virtually on anything, virtually being the operative word, with virtual racing attracting a lot of support, lotto numbers, dogs, sheep (joking), roulette and sports such as GAA and soccer bringing in huge amounts for bookmakers.

Now despite the recessionary times we are living in, the Golden Triangle of Rush Street remains a hub of activity with pubs like Paddy Moran's, Stacks, Bar One, The Bodhrán, Tony Flynn's and The Harp contributing very much to the economic security of Boylepsorts new venture.
Not quite the Chinatown of New York, but there is certainly a cosmopolitan look around the area, although it has to be said, you won't find the Chinese mopping pints of Guinness, but they are big spenders and huge punters when it comes to dog racing, which appears to be their specialised past time.
It is a sign of the times that customers now are given priority and, along with the free coffee, there are adequate facilities to assist you in your attempts to make a profit from your investment, i.e. a winning punt.
Boylepsorts, who also have a branch in Westport, have updated their facilities with the latest technology and creature comforts and it is good to see that some businesses are expanding,

rather than contracting, as is the case unfortunately on the town's high street.

Anyway, here's to the arrival of Boylesports who will bring a more competitive edge to the bookmakers business in the town. Like any other competition, it can only be good for the punter, or so we would like to believe, but I'm a firm believer in the old adage - you can't beat the bookie. Occasionally you will, but, at the end of the day, he will take it all back from you, and more.
But, as a man who has a masters in gambling and who studies betting as one would prepare for one's final examination, the golden rule is this - only bet what you can afford to lose. Stay within those parameters and you won't go too far wrong.