

THIS IS good news week with bridge receiving quite a number of boosts on a variety of fronts.

Last weekend was quite exceptional with all records for the number of players involved in Congress events going by the boards and very good news from the Lederer Trophy in London, one of the most prestigious events on the British calendar.

Mind you, I might add that the top British players could not complain about the luck of the Irish. The team of Nick Fitzgibbon, Adam Mesbur, Pat Walshe and Brian Senior were pipped in the most extraordinary fashion by the professional team of Smolski, Sampson, Edwin and Selway.

Not, of course, that second place wasn't a splendid result.

The Irish team, in fact, beat the winners in both nine-board matches, but in the heel of the hunt in the event was decided in the final match in which the Professionals bid a

A good news week puts the sport in winning form

BRIDGE John Comyn

Grand Slam missing a cashable Ace. A finesse was involved to get rid of the fatal loser when the suit was not led and 13 tricks rolled home. Had the Slam failed, Ireland would have won.

Nevertheless, a fine performance in a very strong field which included the Gold Cup winners and the England team which competed in the European championship.

At home, it was a fantastic weekend. I couldn't believe my ears when I heard the numbers playing in Donegal, Kenmare and Clontarf. That's en-

couraging news for Congress organisers because of the overloaded calendar and I would be surprised if the numbers playing at the three venues were much below 2,000.

One one day alone in Donegal, there were 66 tables of open pairs along with the major competitions which were going on at the same time.

And that brings me to the Dublin Congress due for this coming weekend, starting as usual with the mixed pairs on Friday night.

The Dublin Region is

not noted for Congress events on the same lines as Donegal, Rosslare, Ballina and so on, but President Donal Garvey is determined to change all that and I know that the committee have been working very hard with the social side of things very much in mind.

Dublin, however, has always produced the highest standard of Bridge, so this year there is every reason to expect a Congress with everything. Donal has promised that, in any case. And don't forget the mid-season analysis of the triplicated boards. I'm looking forward to that myself and hope to see the same excellent support as last year.

I will be joining P Walshe, Monty Rosenbe and Adam Mesbur. It fun, too, if you have already entered. Mar Cummins would like hear from you at 313345

Last year, I dropped to Stewarts Hospital Palmerstown after playing in the Moylan Trophy and could scarcely believe what I saw. Not that was surprising in view of the excellent cause. Anyway, I hope the play will be even more jammed tonight for the annual event in aid of mental handicapped children.

Readers of this column know my feelings about this particular cause and might mention that the recent drive in aid of St Mary's, Drumcar at Ros Tara raised over £1,000. Well done Bridge players but especially Niall Collins who did so much work.

Stewarts Hospital is the main Lucan Ros you can't miss it and there are special sections for all grades with excellent prizes.

Just trot along and foot out at least £2.50