

Emerald Island curiosities

Do you think that nothing can puzzle you about Ireland? If so, can you explain why the most northerly place in Ireland is actually in the South? Would you believe that cattle can decide an important battle? Read on to learn about some unusual places in Ireland and about funny Irish pastimes!



Londonderry or Derry?

It is the second largest city in Northern Ireland. It is famous for its **well-preserved** city walls. The trouble is what to call it.

Originally, the place was known as Doire, meaning "oak forest", in Gaelic or Derry in English. In the 17th century, the English, who wanted to have more control of Ireland, built a new town there.



Derry city walls

They named it Londonderry, because the company who sponsored the colony was from London. However, the Irish nationalists were not happy to see the word "London" in the city name. They continued calling it Derry.

It is the same even now, 400 years later – Londonderry is still the official name, but almost all of the people who live there call the city Derry. Even road signs differ: if you are in the Republic of Ireland, you'll see "Derry" on them. But if you cross the border to Northern Ireland, you'll see "Londonderry"!

Doolin is often called the "traditional music capital of Ireland". There are live music sessions in pubs each night and in winter there is a music festival. But if you go there, don't be surprised that this "capital" is only a small village – with just one street! Maybe it is the smallest "capital", but it is surely interesting!

North or South?

Ireland is divided into two parts: the bigger part of the island is the independent Republic of Ireland, and the Six **Counties** are a part of the UK – Northern Ireland. The Republic is often called "The South (of Ireland)", the Six Counties are often called "The North (of Ireland)".

When you look at the map, this results in a funny situation – **the most northerly** place in Ireland (called Malin Head) is in The South! It is because County Donegal, the most northerly Irish county, with lovely

COMICS



howdy-do - nazdárek; tick - klišťe; to owe - dlužit



When you play road bowling, watch out for cars.

beaches and one of the largest sand dunes in Europe, is a part of the Republic, not of Northern Ireland.

The longest place name

The longest place name in Ireland is Muckanaghederdauhaulia. It is the English name of a village located in County Galway. In Gaelic it is called "Muiceanach idir Dhá Sháile" – meaning "pig **marsh** between two seas"!

Cattle attack

Baginbun **Head**, near Bannow Bay, is the place where the Anglo-Normans first **landed** in Ireland, in 1170. Irish-Norse soldiers came from the city of Waterford to fight them. When they attacked Baginbun, the Norman leader set **cattle** on them – and won the fight! This marks the beginning of the English involvement in Ireland.

Road bowling

Road bowling, an old sport popular mainly in West Cork or in County Armagh in Northern Ireland, is played on public roads, usually on Sunday afternoon. The rules



TASK

Look at the words in bold and try to match them with their correct meanings in Czech.

1. well-preserved
2. oak
3. county
4. the most northerly
5. marsh
6. head
7. to land
8. **cattle**
9. the least number
10. tongue

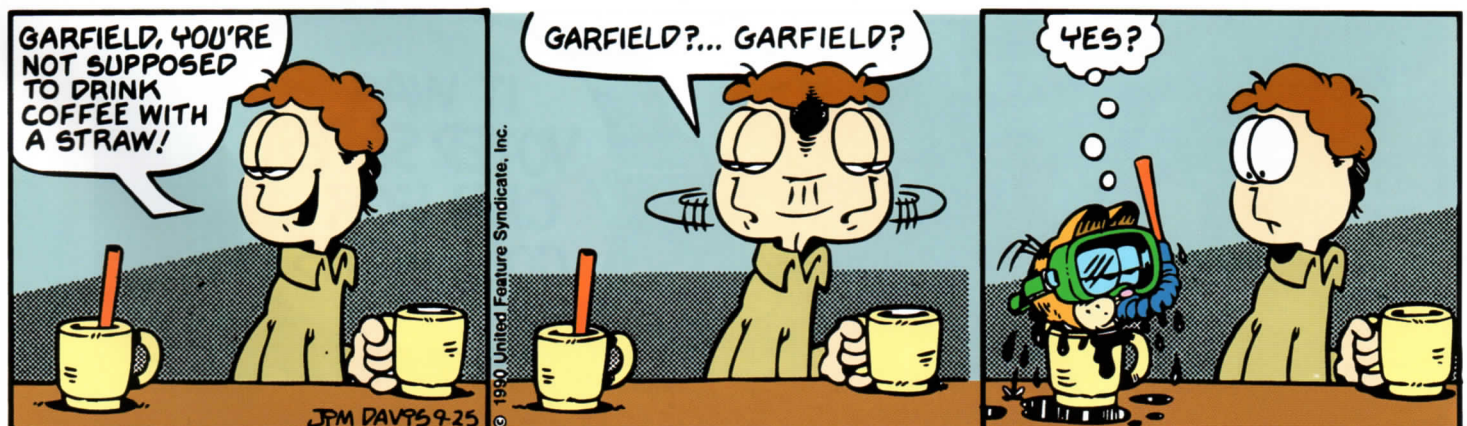
- A) dub
- B) dobytek
- C) nejsevernější
- D) jazyk
- E) hrabství
- F) mys
- G) nejnižší počet
- H) zachovalý
- I) vylodit se
- J) bažina

are simple. A bowl – a heavy iron ball – is thrown from the starting line to a point usually about 4 km away. The winner is the person or team who reaches the end in the **least number** of throws. Don't be surprised to see groups of men standing along the road waiting for the cars to pass to start the game again!

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In Ireland, you can usually see place names both in Irish Gaelic and in English. But in the Irish speaking areas (the Gaeltachtaí) new official maps and road signs should show the names of Gaeltacht towns and villages only in Gaelic. And sometimes they differ a lot from the English names. For example, the Gaelic name of a village called "Ballingeary" is "Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh". Don't break your **tongue** when trying to pronounce it! Brian Friel, a famous Irish playwright, even wrote a play about these differences called *Translations*.

COMICS



you're not supposed to - nemáš pít; straw - brčko