



IRELAND: DUBLIN COWBOYS

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Ballymun on the outskirts of Dublin is a community of council houses and a population with a high percentage of unemployment and poverty. Its young people are exposed to drug addiction and delinquency. Yet many of them found a way to escape the seemingly inevitable... Surprising as it may seem, meeting a youngster on horseback on the waste land or between the rabbit cages that are called 'housing' is quite a common sight. Horses have become the great passion for these turbulent young people and the dedication to them has improved the lives of many. A new law passed in 97, the Control of Horse Act, however, threatens to change all that: to own a horse, you have to be aged 16, own an acre of land and gleaming stables... something that Ballymun cannot offer and the young 'cowboys' put up a fight to bridge the gulf that divides the country, the Ireland of the booming economy and the other Ireland - the social outcasts.

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