



**Elena Piras: Courageous**

# **Winner beats the odds**

Courageous Elena Piras overcame a number of obstacles to win the Margot Campbell Trophy.

The Sardinian-born singer studied determinedly for 12 months to overcome her blindness to learn Gaelic to the high standard essential to qualify just to take part in the prestigious competition.

She also lost part of her hearing when caught up in the 7/7 London terrorist bombings seven years ago.

She attended three courses at the Gaelic college, Sabhal Mor Ostaig, in Skye, during the summer to help her with the language and singing and then she entered for the Silver Pendant competition for the National Mod and finished third overall.

She said: "The homework I had to do all myself with no support from anyone, nor materials in large print or Braille. This took many long hours of hard, tiring work for both my eyes and my neck. Sometimes it would take me an hour to find a word in the dictionary. The songs, as well, had to be transcribed into Braille, which I also did myself at home with my Braille on my lap and my head stuck in a song sheet."