

A group of runners in silhouette, running across a field, positioned at the top of the page against a blue sky with clouds.

# FIELDS OF ATHENRY 10KM

Race Programme 2011



[www.athenryac.com](http://www.athenryac.com)



**Best of Luck  
to all participants in the  
Fields of Athenry 10KM**



Email: [tranquillityleisure@eircom.net](mailto:tranquillityleisure@eircom.net)

Web [tranquillityleisureandspa.com](http://tranquillityleisureandspa.com)

Phone 091 875300

# Chairperson's Address



This year is the 10th running of the Fields of Athenry 10km and we are delighted to have you all here to celebrate it with us. On the 26th December 2002 when 68 hardy souls took part in the inaugural race, little did they know that it would become an important part of a Galway runner's Christmas tradition. Today nearly 1500 runners will hit the roads around Athenry and become part of that tradition. With each year the race has grown in leaps and bounds to become an integral part of the annual road race calendar. This race would not be possible without the massive amount of support from all our neighbouring clubs and the people of Athenry. I would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to all for continually supporting us and embracing the race with such enthusiasm.

Ireland has seen a running boom in the past few years, mainly thanks to the Athletics Ireland initiative of creating Fit4Life which caters for the more casual runner. The number of races on the calendar is increasing by the week; some come and go but those who have a strong club behind them continue to grow and develop. Involvement by all club members is vital to the development of any club and we are no exception. It is thanks to our members that we are able to put on a race of this level year in year out.

First off today are our junior runners. No more than the senior race, this event has grown from year to year which is a testimony to the growth of children's athletics. We are very fortunate to have such a strong juvenile club in Athenry. There is a wonderful group of voluntary coaches who have contributed their own time to develop the juniors from the age of 6 right through to adulthood. The juveniles who are participating here today are the future of athletics in Ireland, and without doubt, in years to come some of them will be competing at the top level in many a road race around the country.

Thank you once again for joining us this year. Have a great run and enjoy our hospitality. Don't forget to smile! You never know when or where that photo might reappear; perhaps in our 2021 race booklet?

**Maeve Noone** Athenry AC (Senior) chairperson.

# Race Director's Address



This will be my 3rd and final year as race director of the Fields of Athenry 10km. It's a tough but highly enjoyable job – or so Mick Rice tells me!

With a bit of luck, we'll get to go ahead on the 26th this year, and the race will take its rightful place in the running calendar. I'd like to take this chance to thank our loyal participants for the last few years, who have stuck with us when the weather gods have not.

It would be remiss of me not to thank all of the volunteers who put this event together. If I look relaxed on the day, it's because there is a great team behind this race who do the hard yards to make it all possible.

Lastly, a special word for those people who are home for Christmas: I know from the emails I received over the last few years that you guys were the people who missed out most, and couldn't take part when the race was rescheduled.

Have a great run!

**Alan Burke** Race Director.

# 2011 Galway 5km Series Report

James Lunden

When we think that the 5km series cannot improve year on year, it continues to happily surprise. This year set a number of new records: more entrants, more finishers, pretty much more of everything. It was the 6th year of the series and there have been 33 races completed successfully (2006: 4; 2007: 5; 2008-2011: 6 each).

The entry process was, as usual, frenetic when it opened back on Friday, 18 March on-line. The vast majority of people who wanted entry, received it, but there were still many people disappointed. Nearly 750 eventually got through, the very maximum that series coordinator, Mick Rice, and the 6 organising clubs, felt it was possible to safely cater for at each of the venues. Entry cost was €30 – a veritable bargain for the multi-race no-frills series.

The series started, as usual, in Athenry, proceeded onto Tuam, then Craughwell, then Claregalway (CRH). It took a slightly new turn after that, with Dangan (GCH) next, and the final race in the series in Loughrea, with the "afters" being held in The Lough Rea Hotel. The courses were mostly the same as 2010 with only Claregalway and Dangan changing slightly.

I find it hard to remember, at this remove, the weather conditions of each race in detail :-(. Not without resorting to viewing the various photographers' images of the races, plus the finish line videos taken by Red Tag Timing's John Cunniffe anyhow! It rained before, during or afterwards at Craughwell, Loughrea and GCH if I recall correctly.

Athenry had an amazing first-evening turnout, with 541 finishing around the now traditional course. The process of putting numbers into people's hands was dealt with efficiently by the local club in the Newcastle Community Hall under the watchful eye of race director, Frank Burke.

Tuam produced another sizzler on their second-year course with more finishing than in Athenry the week before. The town's Big Dig threatened to derail this course but Patricia & Brendan Monaghan and their crew were very happy to find that the wide-scale street dig avoided the circuit around Gardenfield that week.

Craughwell's course was wet but it did not detract from some very fast times being recorded at the Tony Nevin-directed event. A series record of 561 finished that damp evening. Elvis made his now yearly appearance, upping the ante a little on his 20:40ish time of 2010. He ran minus his sideburns this time, which slowed him down last year.

Claregalway and race director Andrew Talbot decided to turn the tables this year, more specifically their course, by pointing the race in the opposite direction to last year. It made the first two km very



difficult time-wise (uphill start towards Orammore on the main road) for everyone but it did make catching up over the last three km easier, finishing with a very fast final km from the Claregalway GAA grounds up to the finish outside the new business park.

Dangan was next up but the weather wasn't good that evening for GCH and race director, Eamon O'Donnell. The race started on the main pitches and finished in the green area next to the Regional Sports Centre. The course went out in the direction of NUIG and through Corrib Village, looping back and under Quincentennial Bridge and back by the footpath alongside the Corrib. By the time of the loopback, the field was well and truly spread-eagled and it made the last few km much easier than it would ordinarily be.

Loughrea was the scene of the final race. I recall it pouring cats and dogs (and probably other furry animals too) up to about 6 or 7 minutes before the 8PM start. Those who waited to warm up until the torrent passed off made the right decision. A few of us weren't as lucky. Most had received their specially commissioned series technical tops by then, from the race HQ and race director, Barry Beirne, in the back of Gaelscoil Riabhach. In all, nearly 440 people qualified for the top. Very few people ran one, two of three races with the vast majority of people running most of the races to qualify for that much coveted black on fluorescent orange-coloured technical top (tagline: The journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step).

Previous colours & tag-lines are in sequence:

**2006** – White on stone t-shirt (Been there, done them, this is the t-shirt);

**2007** – White on red t-shirt (What a way to kick start your summer);

**2008** – Dark green on lime green t-shirt (Galway road runners on tour);

**2009** – Black on red technical top  
(Believe in yourself, know yourself, deny yourself and be humble);

**2010** – Blue on white technical top (Galway runners do it on Tuesday evenings).

The series 'afters' party was held in The Lough Rea Hotel and a good time was had by all who attended.

Matt Bidwell was the star of the series winning all 6 races, with his club-mate Ruaidhrí Geraghty second in the four races he ran in – his stepped back from his own club's race. A goodly number of people ran PBs during the series with many recording very similar times across all 6 races.

The excess of €9,405 from this year's series was again donated to the Galway AAI county board for the advancement of both adult and juvenile athletics in the county.

All three previous 5km series stalwarts remain standing after the 2011 series. Much kudos is still due to Gary Doherty (Athenry AC), Jim Maher (HP Running) and Tony O'Callaghan (Craughwell AC).





Craughwell



Claregalway



Athenry



Athenry



GCH



Tuam



Loughrea

### CLUB PARTICIPATION

Club	Number
Galway City Harriers	151
Craughwell AC	121
Athenry AC	95
Loughrea AC	62
Tuam AC	27
South Galway AC	5
Clare River Harriers	3
Castlegar AC	1

### INDIVIDUAL RACE PARTICIPATION

Race	Number
Athenry	541
Tuam	556
Craughwell	561
Claregalway	519
GCH	501
Loughrea	480

### RACES RAN PER PERSON

Races Ran	Number
Six	230
Five	239
Four	77
Three	49

### GENDER PARTICIPATION

Male	365
Female	376

Pictures by Andrew Talbot, Iain Shaw and John O'Connor (<http://www.flickr.com/edemil177/>).



# Athenry Fit4Life Marie O'Connor

Two thousand and eleven brought with it new faces on the Fit4Life circuit. Chatting and laughter could be heard in the Church car park on a Thursday evening at 7pm and on a Saturday morning at 10am as the Fit4Life group got ready for their training sessions, running 5km, 8km, 10km and beyond.

The first wave of newcomers arrived in early January, closely followed by another large group in March. The Athenry School Run over a distance of 5km was the first race for many of the Fit4Life group as was the Run With Ray (Darcy) 5km in Galway city.

May meant more additions to the Fit4Life family as more people joined. It was also the month when eyes were focused on the Galway 5km series. A lot of the Fit4Life runners tested their skills over 6 consecutive Tuesdays; all those successful enough to complete 5 of the 6 races now proudly wear the series technical top to prove their capabilities!

July, September and November saw another influx of runners, all being taken under the wing of Fit4Life leaders such as Maeve Noone, Deirdre Quinn, Marie O'Connor, Edel Connolly and Elaine Quinn.



The Athenry Fit4Life 5k race in November was another feather in the cap for runners, a lot of members who had joined from the September group took to this race as their first 5k race and all finished it, receiving medals.

In all, the year was a great success with races such as The Streets of Galway 8km, various 5k races and even the Galway Bay half marathon being achievements for various Fit4Life members.

Here's hoping 2012 will bring with it more success and more new faces to this ever expanding group.

# Fifteen or Twenty Marie O'Connor

My fellow running mates had other commitments on Saturday, 6 August (2011) and so moved their long run to Sunday. I was more than welcome to join them but as I like to have rest days on Sundays to gear me up for the following week I felt the only option was to head out on my own on Saturday.

I got up at 6.30 for breakfast and then it was back to bed for an hour until I got up and dressed before heading out the door just before 8am. As a last minute decision I brought some sports jelly beans with me along with my bottle of water; later I was glad at the impromptu addition of the beans.

As I rarely run on my own, the roads around my house were not regular routes. I was going to run loops around a 10k route and an 8k route I'm familiar with, and then make up the additional miles to hit my planned 15 mile run. After leaving the house I decided not to go for this option as I feared staying too close to home would be a temptation to cut my run short.

Instead I left Cloonkeenerrill, turned left, passed our local pub Burkes in Colemanstown and then at the T junction at the end of the road I took another left, bringing me into Tiaquin parish. I had never been on this road before and so didn't know where it would lead to but based on the law of averages I figured it would bring me out near Gurteen village.

I hit a junction where there was a turn right signposted Newcastle Church and I now knew exactly where I was and decided if I kept going straight and hit the next T junction, I would have the option of heading for Gurteen (close to home) or right, towards Attymon. When I reached the T junction I thought I had a great plan, the sign said it was 3k to Attymon and I knew once on that road I could turn down by the school and then take a right to bring me back onto the Newcastle road and back to the turn I had passed a few miles ago. I convinced myself I would be back at that cross by 12 miles, giving me about four miles to get home, making my run into a 16 miler, perfect!

When I passed Attymon school, I started to doubt myself but kept going, at this point I had taken on some jelly beans every three miles and decided to stick with this plan. My pacing was annoying me though. I had to keep my nose in my watch as there were moments where my legs decided to go at 10.3 min mile pace. I actually had chats out loud with myself telling my legs to cop on and stick to the plan of just over 11 min miles.

I came into Cloonkeen and was waiting for the turn to bring me to the Newcastle road when I realised my watch was reading almost 11 miles, for a moment I thought, I could run to Janet Clancy's house and ask her to let me ring Donal to come collect me, but no that would be quitting! Instead I ran on. I knew I was going to be way over the planned 12 mile marker by the time I hit my famous cross but what option did I have only to continue on.

I passed Newcastle church and ran on, wishing for the cross to appear. There was a moment when I saw a silver car coming towards me and I thought "Yes, this is Donal's car, yipppee!", but no it was just a random stranger. I gave myself a good talking to again at this point: I was at about 14 miles, telling myself to suck it up, I'd ran 18 miles before so none of this was new territory. This did the trick and I finally met my cross. My watch read 15.46 miles and I knew it was at least 4 miles home from here. But I was on the home straight; I was running low on water so decided I could only take a small sip as I hit each mile and no more.

I also played a trick on my mind convincing myself when my watch beeped to say I had hit 18 miles it was actually only 17 miles. I ran on and passed Gurteen church. I saw the priest out talking to a parishioner and so of course I had to pick up the pace a bit as I was running up a hill; I couldn't let them see that I was struggling. When my watch beeped the next time I took pleasure in looking at it as it was reading 19 miles, a figure I had never seen before. I was elated! There was a short moment when I thought, "Sh\*t, I'm going to throw up"; but I couldn't allow myself to as this would ruin my great run! Instead I straightened myself up, imagined my chest cavity expanding, took in some deep breathes and slowed the pace. I was grand again.

The next thing to decide was do I run all the way home? I knew 20 miles was near and it was almost another mile on top of that back to my house. My ego was telling me to keep running all the way home but my brain was saying no, stop at 20 and walk the extra bit home as it would be good for my legs. My watch told me when 20 miles passed and I found it hard to stop running. Finally my head ruled and at 20.17 miles I started to walk. I was thrilled, this was the biggest challenge I have ever completed. I had done my first 20 mile run and it was on my own... Okay, so the fact that I got my distances wrong and literally had no choice but to keep running did play a factor in my success...

The icing on the cake was when a neighbour was out for a walk and passed me just after I had come to my walk, we had not met in ages and so she offered to turn around and walk with me home so we could have a catch up. It was the perfect ending as she is a fast walker and it made me stretch out the legs, as well as get to share what I had just achieved with her. I was on cloud nine nattering away, the poor lady couldn't shut me up!

It was a good day, one for the memory bank.

**Ireland's best online community is delighted to support  
The Fields of Athenry 10K and Athenry AC.  
Wishing everyone a great race and a fantastic new year!**

**For a full list of great Irish Races log on to...**

**[www.runireland.com](http://www.runireland.com)**

**RACE REGISTRATION • NEWS • ARTICLES • ONLINE SHOP • FORUM**

Winner of eircom Spider Award 2011

# 2011 Road Races in Galway

James London



Road racing in Galway had its best ever year (AGAIN!) in 2011 with over 60 events taking place in the county, some on the same day, such was the intensity some weekends. A slew of new races were added to the increasingly busy and frenetic calendar. All the old faithfuls continue to flourish in one way or another!

Nine different Galway clubs organised at least one road race during this year, with both South Galway and East Galway running their first ever club races, to join Athenry, Clare River Harriers, Corofin, Craughwell, Galway City Harriers, Loughrea and Tuam on the road.

## **AAI Permitted races in 2011**

- 1st 'Resolution Run' 5km, Saturday 1 January 2011
- 9th Fields 10km, Monday 3 January 2011
- 7th Tuam 8km, Sunday 16 January 2011 (Club)
- 2nd Clarinbridge 10km, Sunday 23 January 2011
- 4th Maree 8km, Sunday 13 February 2011
- 3rd Kilconieron 5m, Sunday 27 February 2011
- 1st Rock'n'Roll 10km & Half, Saturday 5 March 2011
- 2nd Beagh 10km, Sunday 13 March 2011
- 2nd Craughwell 10m, Sunday 20 March 2011 (Club)
- 2nd Newcastle 'School Run' 5km, Sunday 3 April 2011
- 1st 'Ray for 5k' 5km, Wednesday 6 April 2011
- 10th Connamarathon Half & Full, Sunday 10 April 2011
- 7th Connamarathon Ultra, Sunday 10 April 2011
- 1st 'Ardrahan AED' 8km, Sunday 17 April 2011
- 7th 'Christian Camps' 5km, Tuesday 19 April 2011

- 1st Colemanstown 10km, Sunday 24 April 2011
- 6th Athenry 5km – Galway Series, Tuesday 3 May 2011
- 6th Tuam 5km – Galway Series, Tuesday 10 May 2011
- 5th Croi Half, Saturday 14 May 2011
- 3rd Kilcornan 8km, Sunday 15 May 2011
- 6th Craughwell 5km – Galway Series, Tuesday 17 May 2011
- 1st Roundstone 10km, Saturday 21 May 2011
- 4th Claregalway 5km – Galway Series, Tuesday 24 May 2011
- 1st Spiddal 10km, Sunday 29 May 2011
- 6th GCH 5km – Galway Series, Tuesday 31 May 2011
- 1st Clifden Chamber 10km, Sunday 5 June 2011
- 1st Cong 10km, Sunday 5 June 2011
- 5th Loughrea 5km – Galway Series, Tuesday 7 June 2011
- 2nd Monivea 5km, Sunday 12 June 2011
- 2nd Portumna Marathon & 50km & 100km, Saturday 18 June 2011
- 2nd Milltown 10km, Saturday 18 June 2011
- 5th Annaghdown 10km, Tuesday 21 June 2011
- 5th Galway Mini-Marathon 10km, Sunday 26 June 2011
- 7th Headford 8km, Saturday 9 July 2011
- 2nd Maree 5km, Wednesday 13 July 2011
- 1st Renville 5km, Wednesday 20 July 2011
- 2nd COPE 5km Relay, Thursday 21 July 2011
- 2nd Ballygar 10km, Sunday 31 July 2011
- 1st Loughrea 1m, Monday 1 August 2011
- 26th Streets 8km, Saturday 6 August 2011 (Club)
- 3rd Connemarathon 100 mile, Saturday 13 August 2011
- 26th Claregalway 10km, Saturday 13 August 2011 (Club)
- 1st South Galway 4m, Saturday 20 August 2011 (Club)
- 1st Oranmore 'Coast' 5km, Wednesday 24 August 2011
- 4th Clifden Lifeboat 10km, Sunday 11 September 2011
- 2nd Coole Runnings 10km, Saturday 17 September 2011
- 13th Loughrea 'The Gray Lake' 10km, Sunday 25 September 2011 (Club)
- 9th Galway Bay 10km & Half, Saturday 1 October 2011
- 1st Chonamara 10km, Saturday 8 October 2011
- 1st Moylough 10km, Sunday 16 October 2011
- 2nd Newcastle 'Fit4Life' 5km, Saturday 5 November 2011
- 2nd Corofin 8km, Sunday 13 November 2011 (Club)
- 1st East Galway 4m, Sunday 20 November 2011 (Club)
- 3rd Clarinbridge 10km, Sunday 27 November 2011
- 2nd Carrmore 5km, Sunday 4 December 2011
- 10th Athenry 'Fields' 10km, Monday 26 December 2011 (Club) (Fingers crossed!)



# Athenry AC at this Year's Dublin City Marathon

James London



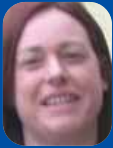
A record number of Athenry AC members finished the 32nd running of the premier Irish marathon this year. Top of the standings, again, was the indestructible Mick Rice, who was running his 7th sub-3 of 2011. He has since run at least two more and may complete 10 sub-3s by year's end. Race conditions were not conducive to very fast times as others from the club found to their cost. There will be other days for them, fingers crossed.

Deirdre Quinn ran the race of her life to dip under 3:30 for the first time. This was the result of months of careful preparation on her part and that of other members of the club very close after her, including club chairperson, Maeve Noone. They put some of our so-called better men to shame.

Peadar Nugent and Martin Keane – though starting in different waves on race morning – finished an astonishing handful of seconds apart on the gun and chip times. This resulted in friendly argument and counter argument between our two presidents as to who actually beat who, given that their chip and gun times are not clear-cut on the issue! Peadar's 32nd Dublin out of 32 too!

Everyone has a marathon story and long may they continue to be told or written!

Name	Chip Time	Gun Time
Mick Rice	2:57:06	2:57:09
Mark Breen	3:07:00	3:07:17
Frank Burke	3:10:25	3:10:25
Tony Killarney	3:10:41	3:10:48
Patrick Forde	3:22:41	3:22:49
Owen Curran	3:22:49	3:22:56
John Langan	3:24:51	3:25:06
Deirdre Quinn	3:27:44	3:32:52
Ruthann Sheehan	3:33:51	3:34:41
Mark McDonagh	3:34:22	3:35:39
Tomas Mangan	3:34:36	3:34:53
Maeve Noone	3:39:04	3:39:15
Ray O'Connor	3:40:41	3:40:45
Aoife Callan	3:45:39	3:46:14
Janet Clancy	3:45:39	3:46:14
Michael Rooney	3:45:42	3:46:44
Deirdre Hassett	3:51:11	3:51:32
Barry O'Sullivan	3:51:47	3:52:38
David Dunne	3:57:04	3:58:15
Kieran Guiry	3:59:50	4:04:59
Sinead Brody	4:00:25	4:04:13
Bridget Murray	4:03:41	4:05:08
George Livanos	4:07:43	4:08:33
Peadar Nugent	4:21:50	4:22:07
Maire T Beatty	4:21:50	4:22:07
Martin Keane	4:21:58	4:22:01
Liam Egan	4:24:20	4:24:20
Pearse Mulhall	4:26:19	4:26:22
Elaine Quinn	4:37:53	4:38:56
Edel Mulry	4:37:55	4:38:57
Frances Egan	5:09:09	5:10:14
Marie O'Connor	5:09:09	5:10:14



# 2011 Athenry AC (Juvenile) Report

Michelle Collins

It has been another successful year for Athenry Juvenile Athletics and the star of the year without a doubt is Sinead Touhy with All Ireland high jump gold medals in both indoor and outdoor. We had a memorable year at community games winning two gold medals with Evan Quirke in Long Jump and Aubrey O'Brien in the Sprints.

We have other athletes during the year that have stood out among the best in the country for their achievements. Brandon Lee came 5th in his age in the All Ireland Cross Country, Grace Cahill (high jump) came 4th in both indoor and outdoor All Irelands.

For under 9s, 10s and 11s we had Eimear Rowe, Saoirse Healey, Brandon Lee, Oisín Rowe, Dean Treacy, Danielle Collins, Danielle Woods, Caitlin Mullen, Katelyn McCullagh, Cormac Hynes, Shea Hennessy, Freya Bohan, Sinead Lyons, Alan Cahill, Aubrey O'Brien, Geordan Mangan, Patrick Cronnelly, Darren O'Brien, Owen Coll, Ivan Power, Luke Burke, Nadine Mc Menamin, Evelyn O'Brien, Fabien Mangan, Mark O'Brien all competing at All Ireland level, which at their tender ages is brilliant.



Now to the important stuff – Mini-Athletes aged 5–8 are really enjoying themselves again this year in the Vocational School Gym and we are always delighted to welcome new athletes and help all the time.

We meet at 7pm on Monday nights in the gym and children aged 8+ at 8pm Mondays and 7pm on Thursdays. At this time of year our training is indoor training geared towards Track and Field.

Throughout the year, we also had the following athletes compete at national level: for the girls we had Finola Kelly, Lydia Doyle, Siobhan McGrath, Aisling Kenny, Arlene Earls, Erica Leslie, Niamh Hannon, Sarah Gilhooly, Alysha Woods, Rebecca Ruane, Shannon Lee, Aine Kelly Clancy, Eilish Hynes, Lorna Hannon. While for the boys there was Christian Mullen, Mathew Treacy, Ryan Collins, Tiernan Burke, Cathal Hynes, Jack Fitzpatrick, Mac Murphy and Niall Kenny. We have some outstanding athletes that will definitely be stars of the future. I hope I have included everyone that competed at this level in 2011, if not please congratulate yourselves on my behalf.

We have an amazing group of people to thank throughout the year for their hard work Bernie Johnson, Martin Hynes, Yvonne Knight, Lorna Holly, Peter Lyons, Mary Kate Dilger, Michelle Collins and Dermot McNamara. I must also add that we need more and more help all the time, so please volunteer. I would especially like to say 'thank you' to Sean Kindregan as our outgoing Chairperson, after many years of service you will be missed, but don't worry we will still take advantage of you on a regular basis.

We can be contacted by checking the Athenry AC web site for details, [www.athenryac.com](http://www.athenryac.com).

We, as a club, believe that the most important thing is that you compete and enjoy yourself. If it was in a team event, we hope that you went home happy, that you were part of a team and club that made it through county's, Connaught's or All-Ireland's together. Competing is what makes everything really special and we hope that you agree that your dedication pays off and we are very proud. Wow, that was what you call a full year.



U12 Relay Team.

# Derrydonnell AC – Some Facts and Figures

Mick Rice

- Founded 1954 and became inactive in 1970.
- Winners of the Galway Senior Cross-Country team championship on fourteen consecutive occasions from 1956 to 1969.
- The club made an immediate impact on the Galway athletics scene after its founding in 1954. An example of that early dominance came in 1957 when Derrydonnell won the individual county Novice, Junior, Youths and Senior titles in the same season, along with the Senior and Youths' team titles.
- Tommy Madden and Willie Morris won four individual senior Galway cross-country titles each in Derrydonnell colours. Willie Morris also won the Galway senior title on a number of occasions before joining Derrydonnell AC with both Kilconieron AC and Athenry AC. Kevin Ryan and Mick Molloy also won the county senior title in Derrydonnell colours.
- Derrydonnell completely dominated the Connacht cross-country championship for the time they were in existence, claiming the individual and team titles year-in, year-out.
- Willie Morris was on the winning team at the Galway Cross-country championship for 20 consecutive years from 1950 through to 1969.
- Willie Morris won the All-Ireland (N.A.C.A.) senior cross-country title four times: Clonmel, 1953; Clonmel, 1956; Athenry, 1958; Dunleer, 1959.
- At the All Ireland Cross Country Championships in 1966, which was won by former Derrydonnell runner Mick Molloy, there were four other runners (Tommy Madden 2nd, Kevin Ryan 5th, Willie Morris 12th – at the age of 46 and Bernie Feeney 20th) in the top 20 finishers. Tuam's Tom Flanagan finished in 3rd and all these runners between then won the team title for Galway.
- Derrydonnell athletes formed the backbone of a formidable Galway team all through the 1950s and '60s. When Willie Morris won his second individual All-Ireland title in Clonmel in 1956, he led the Galway team to their first National team title and Galway became the first team to beat Tipperary since the inception of that championship.
- In 1959 Tommy Madden was just beaten, by Joe Cunningham, for the All Ireland one-mile title on the grass track at the Iveagh Grounds in Dublin. Three weeks after that Joe Cunningham set a new Irish mile record of 4:13.
- Willie Morris also won the All-Ireland Senior Marathon title in Crumlin, Dublin in 1960
- Derrydonnell AC won the Quinlan Cup in 1964 & 1965, which was at the time almost universally recognised as the unofficial All-Ireland club championship.
- Along with Donore AC they were instrumental in healing the split in Irish athletics towards the end of the 1960s. The famous relay race between the two clubs from Ballinasloe to Galway in 1966 received national attention. A proposed rematch was scuppered by the N.A.C.A in 1967, but bridges had been built between the N.A.C.A. and A.A.U. athletes that wouldn't easily be broken down again.
- The triangular race between the N.A.C.A., an Irish Universities team and the A.A.U. gave great impetus to those who wanted to bring the A.A.U. and the N.A.C.A. together and Derrydonnell runners were heavily involved again.
- Derrydonnell broke new ground for Irish Athletics when they became the first Irish Athletics club to visit and compete in America. Their visit to New York in 1961 demonstrated that they were prepared to innovate and to compete outside of the confines of local or even national boundaries. The club also visited and raced in London in 1963.
- The club produced many fine athletes aside from Willie and Tommy, including Kevin Ryan, Bernie Ruane, Bernie Rohan, Mick and Murt Molloy, P.J. Madden, Alfie Madden, Bernie Feeney, Willie Cannon and many, many others.

All these factoids are taken from Mick's recently published book, 'In Their Bare Feet, A History of Derrydonnell AC'. Copies of it can be obtained from Mick directly or via [www.athenryac.com](http://www.athenryac.com). Highly recommended for anyone interested in athletic, social or local history!



## Fields of Athenry 10km Race Result History

Year	Men's Winner	Time	Woman's Winner	Time	Finishers	<40:00	<50:00	<60:00
2002	Paul McNamara	31:15	Kathryn Casserly	36:57	69	13	44	59
2003	Noel Kelly	32:46	Fionnuala Keane	38:18	171	30	92	126
2004	Paul McNamara	31:11	Lucy Brennan	36:36	253	38	130	179
2005	Gary Thornton	30:34	Lucy Brennan	37:30	351	51	168	252
2006	Gary Thornton	30:12	Lucy Brennan	37:03	470	42	211	339
2007	Gary Thornton	30:02	Orla NIMhuirheartaigh	38:52	617	50	253	457
2008	Gary Thornton	30:40	Catherine Conway	36:53	838	58	359	642
2009	<b>Gary Thornton</b>	29:57	<b>Teresa McGloin</b>	35:17	517	53	238	406
2010	Gerry Ryan	31:12	Catherine Conway	35:53	546	49	253	426

## 2011 Stalwarts

The following 9 people hold the distinction of competing in all 9 "Fields of Athenry" 10km races to date. We wish them the best of luck on their 10th outing this year.

Name	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Bernie Kelly	45:48	49:31	52:05	44:20	46:08	47:46	45:46	47:23	45:50
Danny Carr	36:15	38:11	36:00	36:41	38:06	38:06	37:29	38:38	38:26
Kevin O'Dea	48:27	50:16	51:25	46:44	53:49	53:35	45:57	42:33	40:35
Martin Keane	51:20	50:02	54:48	51:17	50:44	52:27	53:42	52:49	52:42
Mary Mullins	1:05:50	1:00:37	1:06:27	1:07:22	1:11:31	1:05:23	1:07:36	1:06:30	1:05:32
Patrick Kelly	49:16	51:48	52:15	50:20	50:56	49:52	54:53	58:52	57:57
Roger Rushe	45:07	44:29	46:15	44:33	45:24	45:52	44:48	46:52	49:02
Tomás MacLochlainn	49:57	56:35	50:10	52:23	56:58	FNSED	56:32	59:05	57:06
Tommy Joe Whyte	36:35	36:16	36:29	38:40	36:58	37:15	37:39	37:11	37:20

## 2010 Prize Winners

Category	Pos	Name
Senior Women	1st	Catherine Conway
	2nd	Elish Kelly
	3rd	Laura Shaughnessy
	4th	Colette Tuohy
	5th	Tara Whyte
Junior Women	1st	Aideen Healy
Women's V40	1st	Deirdre Fitzsimons
	2nd	Michele Reynolds
Women's V45	1st	Carmel Brannigan
	2nd	Anne Moran
Women's V50	1st	Bernie Kelly
	2nd	Cushla Murphy-Hehir
Women's V55	1st	Carmel MacDomhnaill
	2nd	Judith Roche
Women's V60	1st	Nono McHugh
	2nd	Angela McCluskey
Women's V65	1st	Kathleen Hogan
Women's Team	1st	Mayo AC - 2:53:07
	2nd	GCH - 2:53:58
	3rd	Loughrea AC - 3:02:29

Senior Men	1st	Gerry Ryan
	2nd	Sean Gearoid Hehir
	3rd	Matt Bidwell
	4th	TJ McHugh
	5th	Shane Scully
Junior Men	1st	Kieran Fox
Men's V40	1st	Sean Hanley
	2nd	Joe Morrissey
Men's V45	1st	Eddie Newman
	2nd	Tommy Joe Whyte
Men's V50	1st	Padraig Concannon
	2nd	Michael McGrath
Men's V55	1st	Martin O'Donnell
	2nd	Brian Murphy
Men's V60	1st	Martin McEvilly
	2nd	Joe Scanlan
Men's V65	1st	Tom O'Connor
	2nd	Martin Keane
Men's V70	1st	Liam Lowry
	2nd	Roger Rushe
Men's V75	1st	Sean Dooner
Men's Wheel	1st	Gerry Forde
Men's Team	1st	Craughwell AC - 2:18:44
	2nd	GCH - 2:20:40
	3rd	Tuam AC - 2:34:07



# 2011 Athenry AC Senior – A Year of Records

Deirdre Hassett



Two thousand and eleven was another record year for Athenry AC. Aside from hitting a record high on membership levels, club members also broke an Irish record and gained their place at the 2012 Olympics...

**January:** Despite the cold weather, January was a busy month for the club. It opened with a slightly ice-delayed Fields of Athenry 10km, postponed from its habitual 26 December slot. Later in the month, local businesswoman Valerie Glavin set a new Irish record and showed true grit in completing 217km in a 24 hour indoor race in Helsinki, finishing second only to the current female world champion for this event.

**February:** Amidst stiff competition but with good racing conditions, the Athenry AC ladies took a superb gold team medal in the 'C' category at the All Ireland Inter-Club Cross Country Championships in Santry Demesne. With some of the team new to cross country this year, Amanda Cannon, Aoife Callan, Deirdre Quinn and Marie O'Connor put in solid performances on a fresh breezy day to bring home gold medals in their team category. The men also fielded a strong team, but were unlucky to finish in fourth place against strong competition in the 'C' category.

**March:** The annual trip to the Ballycotton 10 mile road race was challenged this year by the same distance but much nearer Craughwell 10 mile race the following weekend. Still, Athenry AC was well represented in Ballycotton, with Conor Dolan taking home a coveted 'top 100' t-shirt with a 58:28 finish in 67th place. Just a week later, 46 athletes from the club turned out in nearby Craughwell for the now annual 10 mile road race. Both the men and women's teams took silver medals in the AAI county championships despite stiff competition.

**April:** Another Irish title for the club was achieved by Sinead Tuohy who won the All-Ireland U-19 High Jump in Nenagh. Runners were busy at the Connemara half, full and ultramarathon events held in early April, from Leenane to Maam Cross. Valerie Glavin and Ruthann Sheehan finished third and fourth respectively over the gruelling 40 mile ultramarathon distance.

**May:** Tomas Mangan represented the club with a hard earned sub-four hour marathon in Belfast on May 3rd. Once again, the May 5km series saw nearly 100 runners from the club take to the roads across Co. Galway each Tuesday in May for a hugely popular (and competitive!) event. Early May

saw the Athenry 5km event held in Newcastle, directed by Ironman-in-training Frank Burke. A handful of club members also took part in the notoriously tough Burren trail half-marathon and full marathon events.

**June:** Lyall Guiney represented the club in the People's Republic at the Cork City Marathon on the June Bank Holiday weekend, bearing race number 1, and finishing in a smashing time of 3:05. Club member Miriam Wall showed the advantages of cross training in taking women's gold at the Cope Triathlon in Galway in atrocious weather conditions. The club sent a team to the Wicklow trail relay, and hampered their own attempts at world domination by getting lost en route.

**July:** Sinead Tuohy added a further gold medal to her February title to take the U-19 high jump gold in Tullamore. Jane-Ann Healy led the women's field at the Longford half marathon to take second place, only months after giving birth to her first baby. Paula Radcliffe, eat your heart out! Frank Burke became an Ironman in Bolton, finishing his race with an astonishing 3:24 marathon (after swimming 3.8km and cycling 180km).

**August:** Club member, athlete Paul Hession qualified for the Olympic Games after achieving the A qualification time at the Senior Track and Field Championships in Dublin. The Irish 200m record holder won the event at the Morton Stadium in a time of 20.51. Athenry AC fielded a huge turnout of members at the annual running party that is the Streets of Galway 8km. Mick Rice won his third Connemara 100 mile title which was held on the same evening as the slightly shorter Claregalway 10km.



**September:** The marathon-in-training crew, led ably by club marathon coach Mick Rice took to the streets of Athlone for the second year of the three-quarter marathon, a great test of marathon preparation. The club championships 5km also drew a big crowd in Newcastle.

**October:** Another record – the number of Athenry AC members successfully completing the Dublin City Marathon on October 31st 2011. Thirty three club members took to the streets for what turned out to be a wet and windy day. Spirits were not dampened as the club was led home over 26.2 miles by Mick Rice who completed his eighth sub-3 marathon in 2011. The women also shone, being led home by Fit4Life leader Deirdre Quinn, who completed her second marathon in an incredibly fast 3:27; not to mention other Fit4Life runners like Marie O'Connor and Frances Egan who showed astonishing progress to complete this distance for the first time in 2011. Frank Burke also dipped under 40 minutes for the first time this month in Moylough.

**November:** A quiet month for running, as the club turns to rest and revival. On November 25th the club will be helping member Mick Rice to celebrate the launch of his book 'In

Their Bare Feet' which chronicles the rise of Derrydonnell AC in the 1950s and 1960s. The following night, the club celebrated a year of great running with their annual Christmas party.

**December:** Christmas brings no rest for the club – Alan Burke and his band of merry men will be busy on Christmas night dusting down the Burco boilers to make tea for the now nearly 1000 runners expected in Athenry on St. Stephen's day for the annual 10km race – of which this will be the tenth running. Competitors and fun runners alike will be taking to the road to burn off the Christmas pudding!

As always, the above is a snapshot of some highlights of the year. There were many other wonderful unsung performances from members, fast and, well, sometimes leisurely!



## Fields of Athenry 2010 – “The Ferrero Rocher Race”

Bernie Kelly – GCH



### **Before:**

Cold morning! Minus three on the motorway going out. Excellent management, signs as you got off the motorway, knowledgeable stewards to direct people to parking, loos etc. Efficient race number distribution. Race director everywhere marshalling his troops.

### **During:**

Fast and furious start as usual with lots of cheering supporters, then the lonely miles where you have to dig deep to keep up with those ahead of you and marvel at the athletes that keep passing you out. Watching out for those in your category – how are they going – had you passed them out or were they hot on your heels waiting to overtake you in the final sprint for the finish line.

In the middle of most races, as I get older I ask myself, "Why do I do this?" Why do I put my body through this? Next year I always say, "I will get back (Editor's note: Can anyone seriously imagine Bernie even doing this?) to knitting or crocheting!" Nice relaxing pastimes by the fire – in out of the cold and wet but then the finish line comes into sight and the final sprint (well maybe sprint is not the right word more of a faster shuffle) and it's all over.

Another race over and the wonderful feelings that rush over you: a sense of achievement, pleasure, even joy; they make up for all the pain. It's like childbirth, tough at the time but once it's over the mind blots out the pain and you are left with the high of a great achievement.

### **After:**

A quick change of clothes and upstairs for the tea! And what a spread!!!! It's common knowledge that I have a sweet tooth, well actually a very sweet tooth so the lovely array of sweet cakes, buns and biscuits were a really welcome sight.

But what really caught my eye were the Ferrero Rocher. Now any race that has them as part of the after race refreshments gets my vote every time.

That was my 9th year to take part in this race, so roll on December 2011 and hopefully my 10th successive FOA; surely something to tell the grandchildren.

(Editor's note: Bernie was first W50 home. Was it the haze of the Ferrero Rocher that made her forget her crystal win in the report wonder?)

# A quick guide to injury diagnosis

Jane-Ann Healy/Meehan



## Achilles tendonitis:

Achilles tendonitis is a common injury in runners. The Achilles tendon joins the gastrocnemius (calf) and the soleus muscles of the lower leg to heel of the foot. Tendons are strong, but not very flexible.

Achilles tendonitis can come on gradually or suddenly. Acute symptoms are hard to ignore and includes pain in the back of the ankle and just above the heel that comes on quickly over a few days. It increases during exercise. It often has a very specific pinpoint tenderness or soreness that increases when palpated.

Chronic Achilles tendonitis often results from a bout of acute tendonitis that fails to heal properly or is ignored. This pain is often worse in the morning but eases as you warm up and stretch the tendon. A chronic condition may actually cause small scar-like bumps to develop in the tendon.

Early diagnosis and treatment is essential to prevent chronic pain and scarring.

## Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome:

Patellofemoral pain syndrome (PFPS), often called runner's knee, refers to pain under and around the knee cap. The pain of PFPS may occur in one or both knees, and it tends to worsen with activity, while descending stairs and after long periods of inactivity.

While the exact cause of patellofemoral pain isn't known, it's believed that the way the patella tracks along the groove of the femur can lead to irritation of the cartilage on the underside of the patella. The patella can move up and down, side to side in the groove, as well as tilt and rotate. All this movement means that the patella can have contact with many of the articular surfaces of the knee depending upon a variety of factors such as muscle strength and balance, overuse, and incorrect tracking. It also means that the cause of the pain may be from a variety of different factors.

Rest is one of the first treatment steps to reduce the pain and severity of patellofemoral pain and runner's knee. Reduce your mileage or turn to non-impact exercise. A chartered physiotherapist should assess you for muscle imbalance and prescribe a strength programme. Weakness of the hip and bum area is one major factor in the development of PFPS.

## Piriformis Syndrome:

The piriformis muscle is a small muscle in the groin that runs from the sacrum to the outer hip bone. If the piriformis muscle becomes tight it can put pressure on the sciatic nerve which passes underneath the piriformis muscle. This pain may increase when the muscle contracts (running), when sitting for an extended period of time, prolonged external rotation of the hip when the muscle is shortened or direct pressure on the muscle. Gluteal (or buttock) pain is common. If the sciatic nerve is compressed for a long time there may be aching in the leg and pain in the low back.

Shortening of the muscle and compression of the nerve is the most common cause of piriformis syndrome, but overuse of the glutes and other muscles in the hip can also cause muscle spasms of the piriformis. Other factors in this syndrome include poor body mechanics and posture, gait problems.

Stretching and strengthening are the best treatments for piriformis syndrome. This muscle rarely gets stretched, so a simply stretching routine can often work wonders. Gait analysis, stretching routine and a strength programme can be provided by your chartered physiotherapist.

Jane-Ann Healy/Meehan  
MISCP, CPSM, BSc, MSc Sports Medicine, PPL  
Biomechanics, Athletics Ireland Carded Physiotherapist.



# A Very Good Day's Work - 217.908km

Valerie Glavin

When: Saturday/Sunday, 29/30 January 2011  
Where: Helsinki, Finland  
What: Espoo 24 hour race  
Who: Valerie Glavin with Ruthann Sheehan,  
Mick Rice & Ray O'Connor

I didn't know how I was going to keep running for 24 hours but I was willing to give it a go. I had done as much training as I could without getting too fatigued or injured, averaging 90-100 miles weekly. My now husband John had figured out how much food and water I needed based on my weight, speed, distance etc. I didn't run at all for 10 days beforehand, which is my usual interpretation of tapering down; cut out sugar and caffeine so I get a better kick in the race.

The race was on in an indoor running track, just short of 400 metres, at 390 metres. The race was starting at mid-day on Saturday and continuing until mid-day on Sunday. My plan was to run for as much of it as I could, just under 10km per hour, knowing I'd slow down in the latter stages, without too many breaks. So mid-day came and we were off, 115 runners including three more runners from Athenry AC: Ray, Mick and Ruthann! My plan was to run at a nice comfortable pace, get into an even stride and stay running. Just before the start, I got talking to another runner who had run this race the previous year. He told me last year's winner didn't walk or take breaks so I thought I'd follow that strategy as far as I could.

After about an hour the crew had their first update, and with 9.8kms done I was feeling like that was the warm-up done. At this stage I had been lapped about 6 times by last year's winner, Sumie Inagaki, and maybe twice by last year's 2nd place girl, Outi Simes, who I recognised from last year's photos on the race's website. I seem to get into my stride with this pace and the laps were coming around fairly lively; every time I ran past the start line my lap times were 2:18, I didn't know what minute/miles that was but it was but it was an interesting distraction.

It was fairly crowded with 115 runners on the track but most were running at a relaxed pace with the odd one running like they were in a 5km race – there's always one! The track itself was rock-solid concrete, covered with what looked like office carpet. On we ran at different paces. John gave me updates of the race and messages from home on Post-Its as I ran past our well-stocked aid/food table. The four hour Post-It read 10.1km covered, total for 40.9km, 2nd place; still taking on the isotonic drinks, the jam sandwiches and jellies. No problems with my race, my stomach or my legs and I was pleased that I was passing the marathon stage in 4:08 without too much effort. Some Post-Its from home read, "Good Luck", "Fantastic" "Keep Going."

The 6 hour turnaround came where we all turned around at the timing mat and ran in the other direction and that probably was the only exciting thing for the crew, but for me it was good and bad – good that I had survived that first 6 hour chunk and bad that I was reminded of the reality that I had another 18 hours to run, walk, crawl or worse. The 6 hour Post-It read 9.4km covered, 14th place overall, 2nd woman and 59.7km total. Mentally, it was a good change of scene, literally looking at things from a different angle. The time was passing very quickly between the updates, John's Post-Its and the jam sandwiches.

The 7 hour Post-It read 9.4km covered, Val 69km, Outi 68.6km, so it was neck and neck between us and she was running grand, but knew that I'd have to stay with her, at her pace, so she wouldn't gain that lap but I need not have worried as she stopped for food shortly after.

The 9th hour I started having caffeinated energy gels to give an extra kick. I didn't talk to anyone outside of the crew or my fellow Athenry runners throughout the race. I'd assumed it was too much effort given the language barrier (mine not theirs!) although I did say "good woman" to Sumie the odd time.

The 10th hour came and I couldn't believe I was still running. I was feeling discomfort but nothing specific other than my legs feeling like they were battered; another 9.8kms covered, 98kms done. Sumie had run 107.7km at this stage. I had some aches and pains but nothing serious. I was sort of regretting now not taking any walking breaks but just couldn't convince myself to stop.

I was still eating and drinking as scheduled and although I hadn't walked yet I wasn't too concerned as there would be plenty of walking breaks to come and I was thinking my pace would slow down soon enough anyhow. A lot of the runners were either stopping to eat or walking until they got it into them. Some were having huge bowls of pasta and I was hungry just looking at them but know that it would definitely not stay down in my belly: I was on minimum rations for 24 hours.

Coming up to the 11th hour, I was feeling fairly good to get to another marker. I had passed the 100km mark in 10:13 and this hour's Post-It read Val 107.2km, #11 104.1km, #8 103km. Having had a good talk to myself, I slowed for my first walking break when I saw Mick walking, I power-walked the lap with him and when I saw "Turquoise Girl" going past, she was 4th at this stage, I took off again in case any tiredness caught me.

The 12th hour: crazy, I was halfway to anywhere or nowhere. I turned around to run in the other direction and gave a "high five" to the runners coming towards us, nice touch and good to see some faces for a change instead of bums and legs. I had ran another 9.4kms, into 11th place overall and still 2nd woman, with a total of 116.6km.



Sumie was well ahead at 125.5km; Outi was still too near at 112.3km; Mick was still going strong just behind me; Ruthann was flying it having just passed the 100km mark in 11:34; Ray was still on target, if a little tired.

I took another walking break and went back running as soon as I'd made myself walk the full lap. As I was running past the crew I asked John to break out the painkillers. The aches and pains I had in my legs were fairly bad at this stage but I had been trying to run through it and it was almost working until I got a very sharp pain in my instep/shin. A few laps of trying to change my gait, I knew the painkillers had to be taken. There was a lot of pain to be seen everywhere in this race and a lot were getting massages or trying to stretch whatever muscle was giving them trouble. Some runners, including Outi, were puking.

The carnage was building up fast.

At one stage I got really confused and had to ask the crew how long I was running; it was after 3am and I wanted to know if I was running for 13hrs or 15hrs. There were two race clocks, two "real time" clocks on the ceiling and I had my watch on Irish time (-2hrs). There was no way to know for sure! I "treated" myself to a walking break once an hour from 12 hours onwards, partly to save my shins and partly to just do something different with my legs.

Still counting the hours upwardly, I got to the 17th hour and another milestone: I had just run through the 100 mile point. Instead of being satisfied and slowing down to walk more, this marker gave me the confidence to keep running to see just what more I could get out of this race if anything.

It was tough enough to motivate myself to keep going so any milestone big or small was great. The marathon, 100km and 100 miles were fantastic points to get to; the smaller things like keeping ahead of Outi and the other girls also kept me focused. It was snowing heavily outside and even that was motivating me to run around yet another lap to catch a glimpse out the window!

The last turnaround at 18 hours was quite scary. I had never ran over 18 hours, my instep was killing me and John now (magically!) had a medical degree and wouldn't give me as many painkillers as I would have liked, apparently there are limits!

I changed tactics at this stage...and my mindset. I started to count the hours down – so 6 hours to go – And I had 169km "in the bag" so to speak. Now I could concentrate on the previously ambitious targets: 200kms a nice round number to start with... I was in pain but still running. To get to 200kms I decided I'd take two walking breaks each hour from here on so I'd make it.

At 19 hours I'd made it to 177km, at 20 hours I was at 186km, at 21 hours I ran my slowest hour yet: 7.8km but I was still at 194km.

John gave me a Post-It at some earlier stage with "10 mile/16km to go to 200km." I couldn't understand how 10 miles was the same as 16km – it took me about 20mins to cop it!! I was in such pain now: absolutely everywhere, even my abs and shoulders were giving me trouble. Also time had slowed down dramatically taking more walking breaks. Opportunity for another talk to myself and I knew 200kms was literally just around the corner, with just 3 hours to go...no need for going soft in the head!

During this hour I ran a touch faster as I was getting nearer to 200kms, at 21:41 I did it: I had just run 200kms. I took a nice slow walking break to re-assess my next target: 210kms. I had a little over two hours to run 10k; my crew told me that I could but I couldn't do the maths myself, so I kept running in case the next challenger caught me.

Just before the 23rd hour of the race, I got to 210kms which was my 3rd secret target. I was so happy at this stage I didn't know how I'd keep running. One hour to go. I wanted to stop and celebrate but as my leg wasn't hanging off and I hadn't been hit by a bus, I had no real reason to stop (other than maybe a touch of laziness.) I knew that I was safely in 2nd place and last year's 2nd place was 213kms, my next mini target, so I thought that I'd "enjoy" this last hour without too much effort. I ran alongside other runners and had a little chat with them: most people were in pain but satisfied and glad to have reached the last hour fairly intact. I ran a few laps for Finn, who gave me a lot of practical advice and inspiration for this race, until the "blocks" were out at 23:45.

With 15 minutes to go, we were given our finishing block. When I was given mine, I started to get very emotional. I stopped to walk but started to cry so ran on to find Mick and walk the last few laps with him.

During the last full lap, I got an almighty pain in my foot under my toes, just like the bones went straight through the skin, so I limped back to where John and the crew were. I put down my block on the ground and stopped and waited for the final whistle, clapping the other runners through.

There was no holding back the tears now and I didn't even try, I was so proud of my effort, to be in great company and a great race. I wouldn't have done it without John and his meticulously precise nutrition strategy. 15 minutes afterwards I fainted, so with hindsight I'd add more salt tablets next time and I'd probably change socks and runners at 18 hours.

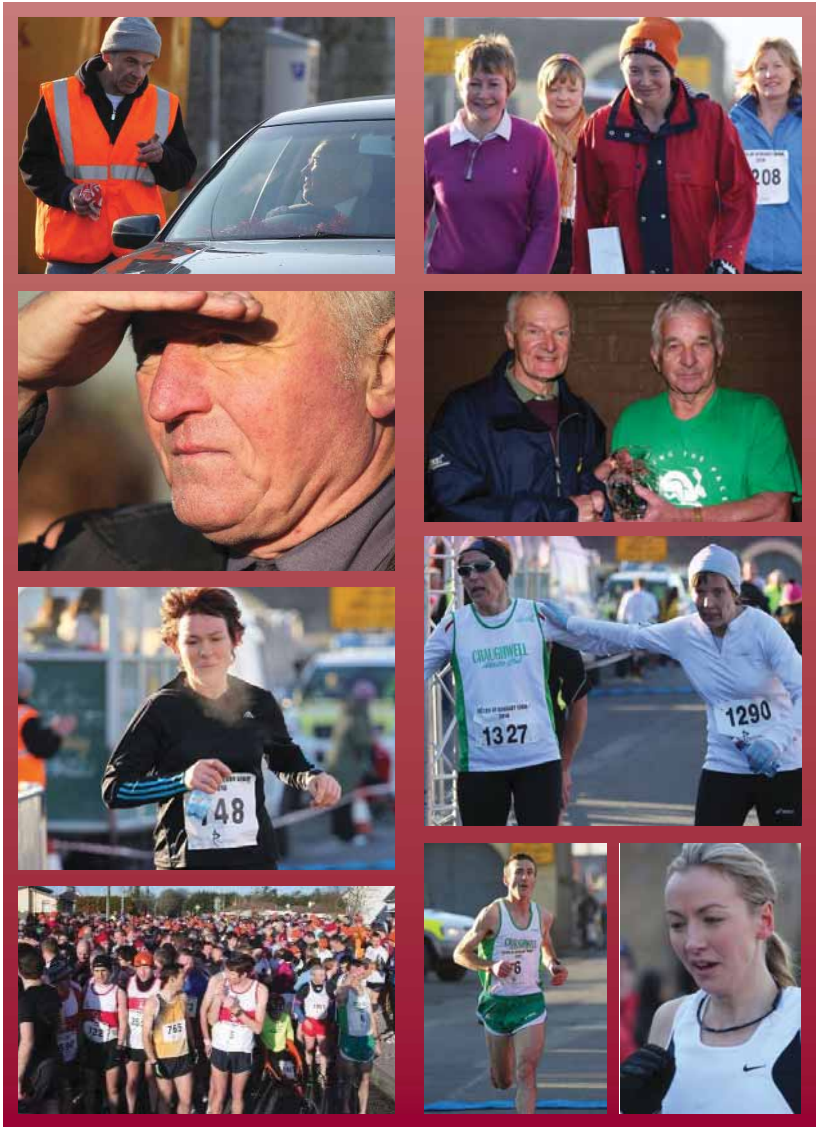
It took me a week to get proper shoes back on my swollen bruised feet. I also lost only five toenails! I was so dehydrated I looked vacuum-packed but yes, I would definitely 100% run another 24hr, maybe try a 48hr if I can find one outdoors...



# Prizes of Attention Results 2010

1	31:12	Gerry Ryan	110	43:39	Liam Nolan	219	48:35	Barry Doyle	328	54:32	Eugene Hoade	437	1:00:54	Dave Tighe
2	31:41	Sean Gearoid Hehir	111	43:40	Liam Lowry	220	48:36	Patrick Scully	329	54:32	Una Murphy	438	1:01:16	Tom Dunwoth
3	33:11	Matt Bidwell	112	43:48	Thomas Flanagan	221	48:37	Paul Connolly	330	54:32	Pauline Murray	439	1:01:27	Ernie Grady
4	33:22	TJ McHugh	113	43:49	Derek Dewar	222	48:40	Kay Tuohy	331	54:34	Pauline O'Halloran	440	1:01:32	Aoife Conway
5	34:13	Shane Scully	114	43:53	Seamus McNameara	223	48:44	Derek Joseph Gallagher	332	54:36	Conor O'Grady	441	1:01:32	Aoife Conway
6	34:27	Jason Broderick	115	43:56	Noel Fox	224	48:46	Diana Hogan-Murphy	333	54:43	Michael Curran	442	1:01:52	Frances Carr
7	35:14	Tony Scanlan	116	43:56	Kevin Broderick	225	48:46	Brian Sweeney	334	54:44	Gerry McGeough	443	1:01:57	Kendra Rabbitte
8	35:32	Tommy Niland	117	43:57	Padraig Kelly	226	48:48	Maurice Healy	335	54:47	Una McGrath	444	1:02:02	Liz Broderick
9	35:36	Fergús Brennan	118	44:04	Eoin Kelly	227	48:48	Kevin Keenan	336	54:48	Maider Loider	445	1:02:02	Angie McSheehy
10	35:41	Owen Byrne	119	44:04	James McNama	228	48:49	David O'Reilly	337	54:54	Gary Molyan	446	1:02:08	Helena Griffin
11	35:50	Brian Furey	120	44:07	James Rohan	229	48:50	Tom Hawkins	338	54:54	Deirdre Naughton	447	1:02:21	James Donnelly
12	35:53	Catherine Conway	121	44:09	Michael McCarthy	230	48:54	Richard Humphreys	339	54:56	Paul Kilkenny	448	1:02:21	Marie Rooney
13	36:26	Paul Keane	122	44:13	Niall Hardiman	231	48:56	Hilda Robinson	340	54:57	Eoghan Hayes	449	1:02:21	Kieran O'Leary
14	36:33	Antia Devaney	123	44:15	Cathrín Kelly	232	49:00	Seán Killy	341	55:02	Seán Higgins	450	1:02:28	Deirdre Devaney
15	36:34	Sean Hanley	124	44:22	Andrew Talbot	233	49:00	James Etworad	342	55:08	James Farrell	451	1:02:32	Bernie Healy
16	36:36	Eddie Newman	125	44:22	Daniel Kavanagh	234	49:02	Roger Rushe	343	55:09	Donal Walsh	452	1:02:34	Aoife Morrissey
17	36:41	David Maher	126	44:25	Brian Joyce	235	49:04	Eddie Fox	344	55:12	Audrey Flynn	453	1:02:35	Tara Prendiville
18	36:42	Elish Kelly	127	44:30	Michael Noone	236	49:05	JP Gilmarin	345	55:16	Gayle Kaaly	454	1:02:35	Marie Cronnelly
19	36:52	Joe Morrissey	128	44:32	Infahit O'Rourke	237	49:10	Mark Timan	346	55:16	Tara Kealy	455	1:02:36	Robert Murphy
20	36:55	Ronan O'Flynn	129	44:35	Garratt Mackey	238	49:11	Claire Hilery	347	55:21	Damien Annolly	456	1:02:37	Anna Ryan
21	36:58	Gerry Carr	130	44:40	Mark Gill	239	49:14	Collette Kelly	348	55:21	Olivia Deely	457	1:02:38	Marie McArdle
22	36:59	Laura Shaughnessy	131	44:50	Reamonn Canavan	240	49:19	Colin McIlrath	349	55:25	Kevin Duffy	458	1:02:48	Paul Gardner
23	37:17	Georridy Hynes	132	44:59	Al Callanan	241	49:21	Robert Doyle	350	55:26	James O'donnell	459	1:02:59	Grainne Costello
24	37:20	Tommy Joe Whyte	133	45:00	Diarmuid Quill	242	49:24	Brendan Devay	351	55:30	Dominic Michale	460	1:03:03	CLARA BURKE
25	37:33	John McHugh	134	45:02	Conor McCarthy	243	49:27	Craig McHugh	352	55:31	Ian Greally	461	1:03:13	Shelia O'Sullivan
26	37:35	Lawrence Kelly	135	45:09	Conor Lawless	244	49:32	Eddie Fitzsimons	353	55:35	Tom Callanan	462	1:03:26	Helena Rosamond Gurley
27	37:43	Colin Joyce	136	45:09	Carmel Branigan	245	49:32	Gerard Lynch	354	55:39	Conor Judan	463	1:03:43	Pat Gavin
28	37:49	Liam McQuane	137	45:17	Brian Johnson	246	49:36	Josephine Gardiner	355	55:40	Fiona Lane	464	1:03:47	Ora McCuskey
29	37:54	Dan O'Rourke	138	45:20	Kevin Lambie	247	49:37	Brigid Kilgannon	356	55:41	Claire Cellarius	465	1:03:48	Hazel Connolly
30	38:02	Barry O'Connell	139	45:21	John Killeen	248	49:38	Kevin Fitzgerald	357	55:46	Kevin Fitzgerald	466	1:04:12	Erinna Cronin
31	38:12	Eamonn McDonagh	140	45:26	Kenneth Fahy	249	49:39	Renia Dealey	358	55:47	Kevin Curran	467	1:04:16	Jane Mangano
32	38:26	Danny Carr	141	45:32	Gerry Treacy	250	49:50	Aideen Healy	359	55:49	Paul Timony	468	1:04:17	Collette Quinn
33	38:33	Paul Fallon	142	45:34	Michael McGrath	251	49:52	Eoin Larkin	360	55:51	Dolores Foley	469	1:04:34	Christy Keane
34	38:35	Collette Tully	143	45:35	Diarmuid Healy	252	49:55	Shane Tighe	361	55:52	Andrew Thompson	470	1:04:43	Lily O'Connell
35	38:36	Darragh Kelly	144	45:37	Paul Timony	253	49:57	Paul Timony	362	55:55	Eis Donohue	471	1:05:14	Clara Molloy
36	38:47	John Gilbert	145	45:37	Val Murray	254	50:07	Mike Quinn	363	56:07	Geraldine Gavanan	472	1:05:14	Tim Hernon
37	38:58	Willie Burke	146	45:39	Enda Holland	255	50:10	Niall Joyce	364	56:11	Niall MacSweeney	473	1:05:29	Laura Canavan
38	38:59	Declan Ryan	147	45:41	Andrew Leaver	256	50:22	Susanne Lally	365	56:21	Declan Moran	474	1:05:42	Paul Mullins
39	39:02	David Mullins	148	45:42	Sean O'Boyle	257	50:31	Nathan Kenny	366	56:21	Brian Moran	475	1:05:43	Paul Mullins
40	39:04	Tommy O'Connell	149	45:49	Morgan McHugh	258	50:32	Cushla Murphy-Hehir	367	56:25	Laura Murphy-Hehir	476	1:05:46	Martin V-Donogh
41	39:06	Tom Hession	150	45:50	Bernie Kelly	259	50:38	Frank Kirrane	368	56:28	Gerard Woods	477	1:05:55	Eiða Foran
42	39:20	David Huane	151	45:55	Denis Broderick	260	50:40	Joan Molloy	369	56:34	Clodagh Connor	478	1:06:32	Annamarie Callanan
43	39:27	Patrick Peyton	152	45:56	Damian Muldoon	261	50:44	Diarmuid Callaghan	370	56:40	Brian Flannery	479	1:06:58	Fiona McCann
44	39:35	Patrick Conyn	153	45:56	John O'Brien	262	51:00	Mary Kate Dilger	371	56:40	John Culhane	480	1:06:58	Fiona McCann
45	39:40	Jim Keenan	154	46:01	John O'Connell	263	51:04	Thom Jennings	372	56:41	David May	481	1:06:58	Gerry Larkin
46	39:47	Tara Whyte	155	46:02	David O'Neill	264	51:07	Alan O'Callaghan	373	56:41	Eleanor Walsh	482	1:07:09	Brian Burke
47	39:51	Conor O'Rourke	156	46:05	Michael O'Sullivan	265	51:09	James McCulla	374	56:42	Liam Gannon	483	1:07:09	Michael Hickey
48	39:52	Kieran Whyte	157	46:05	Aideen DePaor	266	51:14	Maura Foley	375	56:45	Pearse Muldoon	484	1:07:40	Angela Flannery
49	39:56	Martin O'Donnell	158	46:07	Don Nyhan	267	51:14	Joseph Callanan	376	56:46	Ann Marie Walsh	486	1:07:40	Julie Hehir
50	40:10	Niall Conway	159	46:09	Deirdre Fitzsimons	268	51:17	Conan Campbell	377	56:46	Geraldine Gáilin	487	1:07:46	Bernie Quinn
51	40:16	Martin McEneaney	160	46:15	Sham Toner	269	51:17	Kieran Cannon	378	56:47	Pauline O'Connell	488	1:08:33	Tricia Cunningham
52	40:23	Alan Fore	161	46:22	Michael Lane	270	51:23	Alan Hunniffe	379	56:50	Tara Hession	489	1:08:34	Heidi Quinn
53	40:29	Tony McNicholas	162	46:23	Dave Keane	271	51:23	Adrian McCaffrey	380	57:04	Helen Hallinan	490	1:08:44	Aine Guinness
54	40:35	Bernard Geraghty	163	46:23	Alan Moran	272	51:27	Tom O'Connell	381	57:04	Tom O'Neill	491	1:09:11	Majella Cummins
55	40:35	Kevin D'O	164	46:24	Bernard Keane	273	51:28	Sharon McManus	382	57:06	Michael Kelly	492	1:09:50	Noelle Nilan
56	40:45	Kevin O'Rourke	165	46:25	Tomás Manning	274	51:28	Tomás Manning	383	57:06	Tomás MacLochlainn	493	1:09:51	Lisa Donelan
57	40:47	John Flattery	166	46:26	Jim Maher	275	51:29	Liam Walsh	384	57:10	Philip Brady	494	1:09:51	Justy Kelly
58	40:52	Niall Murphy	167	46:29	Martin Hynes	276	51:30	Timmy Heavry	385	57:13	Eileen Molloy	495	1:10:22	Anne-Marie Walsh
59	40:58	Paul Walsh	168	46:32	Kevin Coughlan	277	51:32	Judith Roche	386	57:24	Aidan Doyle	496	1:10:44	Collette Madden
60	41:02	Sarah Neary	169	46:33	Michele Reynolds	278	51:35	Louise Arrigan	387	57:31	Patrina Grady	497	1:10:55	Christie Quinn
61	41:02	Eoghan Kelly	170	46:33	Pat Conneely	279	51:36	Chris Burke	388	57:31	Kevin Lally	498	1:11:36	Marie Hickey
62	41:06	Martin McEvilly	171	46:34	Bernie Muihvan	280	51:37	Kevin Roche	389	57:36	Caroline Grealish	499	1:11:36	Caroline Mureau
63	41:10	Seamus Coyne	172	46:42	Brian McCaffrey	281	51:37	Jarvath Fitzgerald	390	57:36	Gara Gleeson	500	1:11:36	Caroline Mureau
64	41:24	Eoin O'Connor	173	46:43	Carmel MacDonnhaill	282	51:39	Con Lucey	391	57:43	PJ McDonagh	501	1:13:33	Geraldine Holland
65	41:27	Michele Lynch	174	46:43	Philip Harkin	283	51:43	Jacinta Fyfe	392	57:44	Hilda McDermott	502	1:14:10	Pat Gilhooley
66	41:27	Kevin O'Connell	175	46:45	Frank Ryan	284	51:50	Frank Ryan	393	57:46	Emily Ford	503	1:14:10	Sonya Flanagan
67	41:33	Sean O'Connor	176	46:51	Mark Campbell	285	51:53	Joe Toner	394	57:57	Jerry Forde	504	1:15:30	Marie Flanagan
68	41:36	Stephen Broderick	177	46:52	Robbie Reynolds	286	51:54	Kevin Nolan	395	57:57	Patrick Kelly	505	1:15:42	Norma O'Donnell
69	41:38	Patrick Brennan	178	46:52	Richie Campbell	287	52:02	Conan Callanan	396	58:00	Lorna Freeman	506	1:15:42	Caroline Heffernan
70	41:41	Gabriel Gardner	179	46:59	Gerry Carroll	288	52:11	Caroline Murray	397	58:09	Iona Dunne	507	1:16:09	Leona Gibbons
71	41:41	Trevor Collins	180	47:00	Kieran Guiry	289	52:12	Darren O'Grady	398	58:10	Kevin Lally	508	1:16:21	Deirdre NíChéalligh
72	41:44	Brian Murphy	181	47:04	Mary McHugh	290	52:15	Edel Geraghty	399	58:10	Fiona Cummins	509	1:16:34	Vivonne Burke
73	41:48	Sean Judge	182	47:04	Michael Ryan	291	52:19	Stephen Carty	400	58:13	Denise Costello	510	1:17:52	Aisling Deely
74	41:49	Shane Geary	183	47:07	Christy O'Malley	292	52:20	Allen Moran	401	58:14	Oliver Nolan	511	1:19:35	Kathleen Hogan
75	41:52	Sean Walsh	184	47:14	Neil Moran	293	52:22	Tara Cannam	402	58:24	Nicola Ruddy	512	1:19:35	Mike Griffin
76	41:54	Tom Emond	185	47:21	Ronnie Buckley	294	52:24	Ann Marie Burke	403	58:25	Edie Muly	513	1:20:16	Sean Doonan
77	41:58	Tom Barry	186	47:23	Neil Gorman	295	52:34	Tony O'Callaghan	404	58:43	Geraldine Fegan	514	1:24:58	Aine Collins
78	42:01	Sean Lee	187	47:25	John Gurley	296	52:37	Colm Ryan	405	58:43	SP Williams	515	1:25:28	JULIANNE KELLY
79	42:06	Jim Phegan	188	47:27	Sean Noone	297	52:39	Kevin Burke	406	58:44	Tara Flannery	516	1:25:29	PHIL HATTON
80	42:06	Prionnias Gillen	189	47:29	Martin Hynes	298	52:42	Ruth Callanan	407	58:46	Mark McGovern	517	1:25:29	Tom JOE KELLY
81	42:10	Kenneth O'Connell	190	47:31	Paul Reynolds	299	52:42	Martin Keane	408	58:47	Margaret Flannery	518	1:25:29	PHIL HATTON
82	42:11	Paul O'Dwyer	191	47:33	John McEneaney	300	52:44	Catherine Burke	409	58:48	Valerie O'Connell	519	1:25:54	Margaret Flannery
83	42:13	Derek Burke	192	47:34	Keith Egan	301	52:59	John Burke	410	58:52	Paul Currie	520	1:26:34	Mary Quinn
84	42:14	Ronan Fore	193	47:34	Esther Leahy	302	53:05	Brian Farrell	411	59:02	Joanne Murphy	521	1:26:58	Liam Roche
85	42:16	John Fitzmaurice	194	47:35	Tomás Ruane	303	53:07	John Rafferty	412	59:03	Jilly Maguire	522	1:28:07	Seamus Mannion
86	42:16	Noel Griffin	195	47:40	Tom Nolan	304	53:08	Sheena Fore	413	59:10	Sheena Keane	523	1:28:24	Mary Mannion
87	42:17	Chris McEneaney	196	47:42	Tomás Manning	305	53:08	Simon Conroy	414	59:10	Kathleen Kelly	524	1:28:24	Mary Mannion
88	42:18	Noel Fore	197	47:47	Gerry Rohan	306	53:09	Pat Hession	415	59:11	Ciara Conway	525	1:29:56	Maura Burke
89	42:20	Martin Keane	198	47:48	Christy Browne	307	53:14	James O'Dea	416	59:11	Ciara Conway	526	1:30:25	Philomena Kelly
90														

# 2010 Fields of Athenry Photo Gallery



Pictures by: John O'Connor (<http://www.flickr.com/cedenhill77/>).

# Ming and Me – the race he never knew he'd lost

James London

'Ray for 5K' (D'Arcy) was on a few weeks ago in Galway, one of a series of five road races organised around the country during the week of 4-8 April 2011. The Galway leg was on Wednesday lunch-time, with GCH the hosting club and the course set out around South Park and the Prom in Salthill.

The race was immaculately organised by Bernie Kelly and all in the club. The course was accurately measured, which always helps. It was immaculately stewarded, which was my only real worry beforehand given the large number of non-runners taking part and the out-and-back nature of the course. There was even a proper finish line gantry and a race clock (a few seconds out and easily rectified once I had my own Ironman Triathlon on the job) \*but\* there was no finishing times recorded, or a result compiled, intentionally so and clearly indicated beforehand. Weather was clear and dry. A no-frills race! Entry was only a fiver, which entitled the entrant to a nice black technical top and a small goodie bag containing a bottle of water, a piece of fruit and a chocolate bar. Almost as good value as the Galway 5km Series, ahem :).

Anyhow, the report isn't about any of that – I only included that information as a prelude for what was to come. It's about Luke 'Ming' Flanagan (recently elected Teachta Dála for the Roscommon-South Leitrim constituency) and myself. Another "Gonzo" race report from JAL. It's very hard, nigh on impossible, to write a report about another's race, in any case, so all such race reports are going to be, by definition, self indulgent navel gazing twaddle. You have been warned!

Eight hundred plus lined up, eventually in the right direction after some initial doubt as to which direction we were running in. After some cheesecake shots with D'Arcy at the head of the field, the race started with little ado. Almost everyone in the field was running with their black technical top on, with the exception of 10 to 12 runners (I don't include myself in that category BTW) at the head of affairs. The race started and the field spread out very quickly, with the usual suspects taking their positions at the head of affairs. I know my place in this strange procession and settled into a fair clip – knowing my state of fitness – and dug in as early as possible. I was passed by Tony Killarney on the way out of South Park, surprisingly enough given that he was due to run in the Connemarathon Full a few days after. He couldn't resist getting ahead of me!

Very soon after, 'Ming' bounded past me. I was shocked. A TD passing me out. I was appalled. A personal slight :). He didn't just pass me out, he bounced past me. A lovely running style, very light on the road. Unlike the elephant he'd just passed. I was working hard but no matter how hard I work or how fit I've ever been, I still hit the ground like two sledgehammers in unison. I can never sneak up on anyone on the road, whether I wear runners or slippers :-).

Mercifully(!), Ming didn't pull away from me once he flitted past. I was tracking him as if my life depended on it. He was getting cocky though. He started bounded onto, almost over on occasion, the stationary seating that is all the way up the prom. He was just rubbing it in now.



Never a fella to let anything go, I shouted up at him, "Lay off the drugs, Ming!" See <http://www.independent.ie/national-news/councillor-to-make-complaint-over-mings-illegal-drug-use-2582998.html>.

He looked back and had a big smile on his face. I could barely see it as I was constantly swatting the sweat off my very bald head. I now know what denuded rain forests feel like, when rain falls. The rain just runs straight off the land and into the nearest river; the same as the sweat off my head. I keep forgetting to put Vaseline over my eyebrows to help divert it away from my eyeballs.

Back to the story at hand...I dared him further, with the long game in my mind, that he wouldn't be vaulting over these seats on the way back, on the off-chance that I would still be close to him on the way back in. He seemed to take on the challenge as we dug in going up the prom, slightly against the wind. We got to the turn at the car park between Seapoint and Leisireland, having already met the leaders on the way back. At this stage, I was still a few metres behind Ming. There were 15 or 20 ahead of us, only recognising Tony Killarney and my old mucker from Headford, who beat me by a split second in Craughwell, Fergal Flynn. A few had passed me around 2km but other than that, it was a very stable race: passed no one, passing fewer.

Ming hadn't moved any further ahead and we had been joined by a third party, who was sitting between us: behind Ming but to the left and ahead of me. Three-ish km and Ming was still jollying around. I wasn't down and out yet! I hadn't forgotten the dare thrown out earlier. Had Ming?

We turn to go back up Grattan Road and I thought my chance was gone. I reminded Ming still five metres up ahead of my earlier dare. He nodded but I was running out of seats before going back into South Park. I wasn't being burnt off. Killarney and Flynn weren't pulling away either; in fact both were coming back to me a little, I thought. I wasn't going as badly as I'd been worried I might beforehand.

It was an impressive sight passing all the people in their black tops on the way back in, both flows staying to their right, moving in their own direction perfectly. Strong stewarding helped.



Back to Ming and my personal battle with him. He made his move on my dare, most unsurprisingly too. He suddenly darted to his left to jump onto and off the second last available seat, almost taking out the lad tucked in to his left in the process. I was far enough back only to be surprised by this move and nothing else. The lad between us was chopped up but was still upright. I made my move, in as much as I'll ever make a move. I sidled past both lads. Perhaps they were dis-entangling themselves, perhaps they had just run out of steam, perhaps they had stopped for a chat...perhaps anything but I wasn't about to find out or rubberneck to see?

I was ahead of them going into South Park and a full km to go. I never dared to look back, only staring ahead to see how close I could get to Killarney. I didn't really expect to beat him given his current great form but I did think he might lay off the gas with Sunday in mind. He didn't, especially so when he had a few stey looks behind halfway up the last km. Flynn was sashaying away further up the field – he's the lad wearing the orange bomber jacket in the Galway leg images on D'Arcy's web site – and I knew I'd never catch him before the finish.

I was more worried as to who was sizing me up further back. It's times like this where I wish I'd trained <harder/better/at all> for races. This is where it really clicks in: where the credits clocked up in during hard/long sessions are cashed in. You

can't cash in what you don't have to start with, especially in these NAMA-infested days :).

No one did pass me during the run-in and I passed no one – that is my imperfect recollection of the last few minutes of the race and I'm sticking by it. There was one image of me taken as I crossed the line and there were two lads within five metres of me but I recall neither of them during the race. Ming was a beaten docket but I didn't know by how much exactly. There wasn't a video camera on the finish line (and no result) but someone did tell me that he bounded home about 10 seconds later. There were km splits marked on the road but not clearly enough to identify them while running. I don't wear the new de rigueur Garmin so have no idea of my splits but I would be hopeful in saying that my last km was around 4:00.

I recorded myself as doing 20:51, 20:36 on the clock. Very happy with the time as anything under 21 had been my unwritten / unfocused target beforehand. I got my picture taken with Ming too (see above). It was only in the last few days that I realised that Ming has a 3:19 marathon under his belt – see latest Irish Runner. Little wonder. Tony Killarney had no ill effects of the run either, skating home in 3:17 in Connemara. Not bad for an auld fella. Fergal Flynn will have to wait for another day but he's on two warnings from me now.

## Go deo arís Peadar Nugent

I announced at our (Athenry AC) AGM in early 2010 that, following medical advice, I had to give up running. Running had already been a regular part of my life for more than 40 years. However, a couple of unfortunate accidents had impinged on my lifestyle in recent years. I severed my left knee anterior cruciate ligament when falling awkwardly from a very low wall in May 2005. The ligament was successfully reconstructed surgically in June 2006. I had returned to running and, following lengthy rehabilitation, was just about getting back to full fitness when I was rear-ended in April 2007 at traffic lights in Taylor's Hill in Galway. The road accident put an end to my gallop almost immediately and, ultimately, resulted in my requiring surgery in May 2009 on a glute muscle which had separated completely from my right hip. I required further surgery in December of that same year, to repair a severed tendon in my left shoulder. Recovery, though slow and often accompanied by severe pain at night, was greatly helped by the expertise of Chartered Physiotherapists, Noel Burke of Renmore and our very own Jane-Ann Meehan (Ed note: Better known as Healy when road running). But the pain at night still continued.


My GP, Dr Ian O'Connor of Athenry, suggested in August 2010 that I might try Glucosamine. I must admit that I had never heard of this medication, but I told the good doctor that I was prepared to try anything which might relieve my pain. Glucosamine comes in capsule form and the usual adult dosage is one capsule three times daily. Alternatively, the daily dose of three capsules can be taken in one fell swoop. I chose the latter option. Dr O'Connor advised me that, for the

medication to work, if at all, I'd have to adhere strictly to the daily intake for at least three months. Amazingly, my pain began to dissipate after a little more than two months and I have been totally pain-free since January 2011, buíochas mór le Dia agus le Glúcósáimín, and have long since discontinued taking the capsules. However, just in case one may think that it's a cure-all for pain for everybody, there is a caution applying to Glucosamine, insofar as it may not be used by persons allergic to shellfish. It worked for me and, needless to say, I'd swear by it

I was thrilled to be given the medical all-clear in April 2011 to resume running. It was marvellous to be officially allowed back to an activity which had given me so much enjoyment over many years. My efforts in the 2011 Galway 5K series from late April to early June, while not spectacular, were very satisfying to me personally and laid a solid basis for my participation in the Dublin Marathon on 31 October. I predicted a finish time of 4:20 in my entry form for that event and, accompanied by my clubmates Valerie Glavin for 11 miles and all the way by Máire Treasa Beatty, I had a chip time of 4:21:50 – mission accomplished and less than two minutes over target. Máire Treasa, who encouraged me particularly when the going got tough in those final miles and downpour, incredibly ran the New York Marathon the following Sunday in 4:08. The lady is just amazing, considering that she had her own injury problems during the summer

The moral of this story is: Ná habair choiche "go deo arís."





# CONNACHT ACCOUNTANCY

ACCOUNTANTS AND BUSINESS ADVISORS

Specialists in the provision of  
accountancy services to small and  
medium sized enterprises.

*Offices: Old Church Street, Athenry  
& The Technology Centre, Mervue, Galway City*

BY APPOINTMENT ONLY:

*Jane Mangan FCCA 086-3781038 / 091-745512*

Accounts ~ Taxation ~ Bookkeeping ~ Payroll Bureau  
Company Secretarial ~ Cash flows ~ Financial Planning  
*Member of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants*



ACCA



# KEARNEY CYCLES

Terryland retail Park,  
Headford Road, Galway.  
Phone +353 091 563 356

[www.kearneycycles.com](http://www.kearneycycles.com)

## Calling Athletes in South Galway

**South Galway AC is  
the newest club in  
the County of  
Galway. They have  
approximately 100  
adult members  
and 50 juveniles.**



The adult section of the club trains twice a week. On a Saturday morning, you will see them in Coole Park at 8am rearing to go! If 8am is too early for you then you can catch them again in the Lidl car park in the town of Gort on Wednesday evenings at 7.30pm.

The club caters for all abilities with a Fit4Life section too. The club are also hoping to introduce a walking section in 2012.

If you are interested in joining this dynamic new club, contact Margaret Walsh on 087 9917961 for the adult section and Clare Dalton for the juvenile section on 086 8575957. See our Facebook page too for more details on club activities.

# Galway's Last Senior Cross-Country Team Title

TJ Beatty – Loughrea AC



On a windswept day in 1966 in Dromoland, Co. Clare the Galway Senior Men's Team had a resounding victory in the All Ireland NACA (National Athletics and Cycling Association) Cross Country Championships. On that famous day all three individual medals were claimed by Galway runners: Mick Molloy won the individual title and he was followed by Tommy Madden (2nd), Tom Flanagan (3rd) with Kevin Ryan (5th), Willie Morris (12th) and Bernie Feeney (20th). [For more details of this glorious era in Galway distance running and the performances of these top class runners I would recommend In Their Bare Feet, a recently published book by Athenry AC member Mick Rice.]

Twenty years later the National Inter-Counties Championships were held on Sunday December 21st at the UCC circuit in Cork, this time under BLE (Bord Luthchleas na hEireann) rules. In Galway a special effort was made to field the best possible team and sponsorship was secured from Supermacs to bring home some American based athletes – Paul Donovan from Galway City and Richard Mulligan a native of Kilkerrin. Donovan in particular was in good shape and had finished 6th in the recent US Championships in San Francisco, with Marcus O'Sullivan 7th and John Treacy 10th. Mulligan had run a most respectable 28 minutes 29 seconds for 10,000m earlier in that summer. Jimmy Fallon, who was on scholarship in Providence College, was also on the team. Jimmy now resides in America and is the brother of Paul Fallon who is well known to Galway runners as the organiser of the Annaghdown 10km.

## For the record the men selected for Galway were:

Paul Donovan, Athletics West - Jimmy Fallon, Pearse AC - Richard Mulligan, Kilkerrin - Gerry Ryan, Loughrea - Gerry Reilly, Loughrea - Frank Daly, Loughrea - Conrad Conneely, GCH - PJ Coyle, GCH - Anthony Spellman, Athletics West - Noel Hallinan, UCG - Seamus O'Donnell, GCH - James Connell Clare River Harriers - Subs: Paul Dunne GCH - Greg Heffernan UCG - Sean Crehan Loughrea

Gerry Ryan is the son of Kevin Ryan, who had featured on the victorious team of 1966.

On the long bus journey to Cork that Sunday morning the team members were well aware that Limerick were the pre-race favourites. They also had athletes home from America – most notably Frank O'Mara, Mick O'Shea and Pat McCarthy.

On arrival in Cork there was huge disappointment among the Galway contingent when the news filtered through that Richard Mulligan was not going to start. The Limerick team was also weakened due to the withdrawal of Frank O'Mara, due to a back injury.

The 10,000m test at a muddy Mardyke turned into a real 'two horse race', between Paul Donovan and Waterford man Brendan Quinn, who led for most of the race. However, as the finishing line beckoned, Donovan responded magnificently to the challenge claiming the gold medal, with about 12 yards to spare, in a time of 32 minutes 14 seconds.

Galway fought a battle royal with Limerick for the team title. In the end, Galway only had one point to spare over the Munster men. Apart from Donovan, there were also some commendable individual performances. Gerry Ryan ran a splendid race to finish in 4th, followed closely by Jimmy Fallon in 10th. Equally praiseworthy was the performance of Loughrea athlete Gerry Reilly, who had been a doubtful starter due to flu. Despite this, he had a top 20 placing, finishing 18th overall. The final two scorers were Conrad Conneely in 25th place and James Connell in 35th place.

All in all, it was a long day for the Galway squad. They left for Cork at 7am and encountered treacherous road conditions before reaching the Mardyke. Twenty years had elapsed since the 1966 victory and sadly in the intervening 25 years the title has not returned to Galway.

In contrast to returning victorious GAA teams, the team of 1986 arrived back in Galway without any great fanfare. Despite the protests of the bus driver, who stated he had to be back in Galway to do a bingo run at 9pm, the team had a quiet celebration in Gort.....burgers and chips in Supermacs followed by a few pints. Monday morning saw the victorious team members back in work as normal!!!!

#### Footnotes:

- Pearse AC was a Galway City-based club from 1963 to 1993. In the mid 1970s it was ranked as the top juvenile club in Ireland for two years in a row and also won two national junior inter-club cross country titles in a row. The current Chairperson of the County Board, Andrew Talbot, was a member of Pearse AC during that time.
- Athletics West was also a Galway City-based club.
- Paul Donovan won the silver medal at the World Indoor Championships in 1987. He represented Ireland at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics at 1500m, and in the 1992 Barcelona Olympics at 5000m. He ran a 3.55 mile in 1984.
- Brendan Quinn represented Ireland at the 3000m steeplechase in the 1988 Olympics, and is the father of Shane Quinn, who in March of this year won the Junior Men inter-club cross country title at Santry.
- Limerick athlete Frank O'Mara won two World Indoor titles at 3000m in 1987 and 1991. He competed in three Olympics at 1500m and 5000m.
- BLE was formed in 1967 and in 1999 NACA dissolved completely and both BLE and NACA joined together to form the Athletics Association of Ireland (now Athletics Ireland).
- 20th December 1987... Brendan Quinn won the National Inter-Counties title in Santry with 13 seconds to spare over Gerry Ryan. On this occasion the Galway team did not have the services of Paul Donovan or Richard Mulligan and had to settle for the bronze medals in the team competition behind Dublin and Limerick.
- The author was team manager for this team and later received the Irish Life Manager of the Month award for December 1986. Only two athletics-related "manager of the month" awards have been won since that time.

# annertech

[www.annertech.com](http://www.annertech.com)

Custom Website Development  
Practical Internet Advice  
Drupal Experts

# That's Women for Ya!

Martin Keane

For those old enough to remember, the above was uttered one day in the Dail (to his regret, I'm sure) by a former Taoiseach. I don't know what the women in question said or did to him that day but it's safe to say it had nothing to do with women running long distance road races. At the beginning of the 1970s there weren't many men, never mind women involved in the sport of running. Galway City Harriers, Loughrea AC, Pearse AC, Tuam AC were doing a bit, one way or another. In the middle of that decade, Loughrea AC started their road races, which attracted the best athletes in Ireland and the UK to their events.

At the start of that decade I started up a wholesale fruit & veg business. Every Saturday morning my first call on my Connemara run would be Kelehans in Bushy Park, which at that time had a small grocery shop & bar. It was run by a lovely old lady called Mary Ann Kelehan. Now also at this time, one brave young girl decided to buck the trend by starting marathon training.



One Saturday morning, while dealing with Mary Ann, the marathon girl appeared at the shop door and asked for a drink of water. This era was long before Ballygowan started up bottled water manufacture. Mary Ann wouldn't have been familiar with marathon runner's liquid requirements anyhow.

While the girl was standing there, clad in just shorts and singlet, maybe Mary Ann feared she was feeling sick or slightly faint, but she retreated to the kitchen and came back with a chair and a cup of water, advising the girl to,

"Sit down, a girlreen, and you'll be alright in a while." The girl took one look at me and another at the ceiling before gulping up the drink of water and legging it out the Moycullen road. Mary Ann would have been well aware of the wonders other liquid products from the bar can do for one's footwork, but that day she probably thought her cup of water was equal to what they have in Lourdes.

That girl turned out to one of Ireland's best marathon runners of the era and Mary Ann passed on to her eternal reward some years later. After extensive reconstructions years later, they called the lounge 'Mary Ann's' in her honour.

Early in the 1980s, finding myself way overweight, I decided to take up running and on my first race – which was a 10km in Galway – I found myself running the last few miles alongside a then little-known academic/politician, Michael Daniel Higgins. Since then, I've competed in races in every corner of the country, with some overseas races for good measure, and in my three decades involved in running, I must say I've met many acquaintances and made some lifelong friends too.

Most people would say I've reached the 'departure gates' but for myself I'm convinced that I'm still only in the 'Duty Free area.'

Nowadays, running is far more popular than the time I mentioned above, with races almost every weekend, and mid-week in summer time. I'm also led to believe that women have more than 50% of current AAI registrations. Maybe, lads, the discos will soon die a death like the dance halls and marquee dancing before them; maybe road races will be the place to meet the love of your life, something like the crossroad's dancing of my youth.

To all competitors at today's 10th year of the Fields of Athenry 10km, I hope you have a good run and an enjoyable visit to Athenry, but especially to all female runners as you pass underneath that famed arch, having taken the 'scalps' of many of the men out on the course, have a silent thought to yourself and say, "That's Women for Ya!"





# Galway AAI County Board – Who and What is it?

The Galway AAI County Board will not be familiar to most who aren't themselves involved in the running of their own club, or who are not intimately involved in the organization of athletics – both juvenile and adult – in the county of Galway!

It is comprised of representatives of all registered Athletic Association of Ireland (AAI) or Athletics Ireland (AI) clubs and elects its own executive to conduct the business of ensuring that athletics in the county is run to the utmost high standards. Currently, there are 12 registered clubs in the county and 2500+ registered athletics. In alphabetic order they are: Athenry, Ballinasloe & District, Castlegar, Club Lúthchleasaíochta Chonmara (new in 2011), Clare River Harriers, Corofin, Craughwell, East Galway, Galway City Harriers, Loughrea, South Galway (new in 2011) and Tuam. Galway currently possesses three of the top 10 largest clubs under the aegis of Athletics Ireland, in Galway City Harriers (800+), Craughwell (700+) and Athenry (370+).

The county board organises a range of official county championships each year, starting with the indoors in January (usually in Nenagh, but with Athlone now opening this might change) which is mostly juvenile centric. The focus moves onto Track & Field during May and June with two sets of very exciting championships, two Saturdays for juveniles, with under 9s to 11s on their own while the under 12s to 19s get their own date a few weeks later. (The older juvenile relays may run on a third evening depending upon demand.) The adult Track & Field championships have been given a new lease of life in the past number of years with Paul McNamara and latterly Brendan Glynn doing trojan work to make these three Thursday evenings in June both competitive and inclusive. These championships are spread out to allow the same people run in the different middle-distances races across different evenings. These championships are always run on the track in Dangan.

Later in the autumn, it's cross country time with two full days (two weeks apart) given over to the 'odd' (under 9 to 19) and 'even' age (under 10 to 18) events. The adult cross country championships are attached to one of these two juvenile dates depending on scheduling. The hosting of these championships are distributed amongst the clubs, with Loughrea hosting the even ages (including adult) on their famous old sod in Bushfield while Mrs. Bane's field in Athenry hosted the odd ages this year. In recent years, these championships have been in Tuam as well as Craughwell and Dangan. Clubs take great pride in taking turned to hosts these cross country events! The County Board also hosts the incredibly successful Primary Schools Cross Country Championships each late-September in

Renmore. This year over 1050 children from 3rd to 6th class took part of the four races, almost 250 in each event. The incredible success of this event has created problems unforeseen even three years ago: the event may have to have qualifiers as we cannot deal with a further increase in interest.

The county board also sanctions a number of road race county championships each year, with the Craughwell 10M and Claregalway 10km being the designated county championship races in 2011.



Galway Delegation at AAI Congress 2009.

The board also deals with the permitting of road races in the country, which has exploded in both scope and complexity in the last few years, from what was once only a few years ago a very low base. When Athenry AC's Fields started a mere 9 years ago, there were only four (Streets, Claregalway, Loughrea and the Connemaraathon) or possibly five other road races taking place in the county. In 2011, the county board (see article elsewhere here) permitted over 60 different road races in the county. Yes, SIXTY! Races from ONE mile to ONE HUNDRED miles were permitted locally, once adequate race plans, measurement certificates and insurances were provided. Such permitting is very much sought after for a variety of practical reasons. The oversight of the Galway AAI County Board in this area is one of the reasons why road racing is at such high ebb in this county at the moment and long may it continue.

The county board convenes 6 or 7 meetings plus AGM a year where the clubs come together to discuss its affairs, deal with permit applications and to organise the county championship events. It also acts as a forum for people like our own Paul McNamara (Athenry AC) to come and discuss what the governing body is doing to advance athletics nationally and locally.

Initiatives such as Fit4Life is one very obvious manifestations of this work between national and local and has proven to be wildly successful in the Galway context. Who in the county hasn't been touched by this wonderful



movement over the last 5 or 6 years? Paul is the full-time Regional Development Officer for this area and works tirelessly in spreading the gospel of athletics hereabouts.

The Galway AAI County Board has been incredibly lucky to be the recipient of the proceeds of the Galway 5km Series surplus for the last number of years, thanks to Mick Rice and his committee of organising clubs. This has injected much needed funds into the County Board, which is being used to further strengthen the basis on which the athletic clubs operate in the county. It has been used to provide funding to allow county team compete in the National League and is also being utilized to upgrade the equipment that our county championships can use. For instances, there are plans to purchase an electronic timing system, which will be a real boon for short distances sprinters in the county. Various monies from the Local Sports Partnership have also been injected into the Galway AAI County Board in recent years likewise.

At the board's recent AGM, James Landon was re-appointed secretary for a 4th year while Michael Tobin (Craughwell AC) finds time in his incredibly busy schedule to

continue in his role as treasurer for a second year. Andrew Talbot (CRH) was imposed upon for a second year to oversee us all in his role as chairman. Mark Davis is PRO for a third year and does excellent work in ensuring that the 'good news' is spread amongst the media, which in these diffused 'web media' days is not nearly as easy or straightforward as it might seem. People like PJ Coyle (GCH), Brendan Monaghan (Tuam) and Margaret Walsh (South Galway) are also involved in the County Board. Tom Finnegan (Craughwell) and David Evans (Tuam and Galway's only representative on a AAI/AI national committee) are some of the board's remaining strong links to a pre-web-&-pre-current-running-boom time and always act as steadying influences in ensuring that we learn from our history when making decisions or taking appropriate actions.

The Galway AAI County Board is always interested in hearing new voices and prevailing on fresh man/woman power to advance all our clubs' objectives. A strong county board leads to strong clubs and vice versa. It's your club, it's your county board – we would love to hear from you. Contact your club or the officials named above directly in you want to get involved!

**Portumna 100k  
50km & Marathon**

**16th June 2012**

**ATHLETICS IRELAND**

**AIMS**

**ENTER ONLINE :  
[www.runireland.com](http://www.runireland.com)**



# Galway Community Games

Vincent Conway – Chairman, Galway Community Games  
and also of East Galway AC



Galway Community Games celebrated 40 years in existence this year and it was a year of many highs for the county. With an estimated 20,000 children taking part in Community Games in the county annually, Galway is one of the strongest Counties in the country. While we as a county always struggle with getting volunteers for our many County Finals we do run competitions for over 42 different disciplines in the County.

The community games calendar is pretty much an all year round one with activities starting in January and running through to the National finals in August, with a huge amount of clerical work etc. still to be done in the latter part of the year. We have moved forward in leaps and bounds over the past three years and are becoming more and more computerized each day.

We have eliminated for the most part the repetitious system of collecting birth certificates for every event that the children competed in and we have introduced a County Registration system that has been held up as an example to all other counties. At County Finals winning participants are photographed for the ID badges at National and sign necessary documentation on the day and this eliminates the need for areas to spend so much time trying to organise photos from its winning competitors.

Our main aim is to increase participation through forging closer working bonds with the governing bodies of all the activities that we endeavour to develop. We would hold the belief that the best people to run our events are those who are best qualified in the eyes of the governing bodies of the events they are involved with. To this end we would ask those involved with the different bodies to lend their assistance and expertise to us and this applies especially to those involved in the AAI as Athletics forms such a huge part of our core list of events.

The next two years will see radical changes within the organization, not just at county level but at National level also, with many events being dropped and more being added to the calendar. The logic behind this is that we introduce children to sports etc and many of the events that we do are very well catered for already. We see an end in our athletics calendar to the walking race which is such a technical event and very poorly supported over recent years and we see the introduction of the triple Jump competition for the U16 age group. Also there will be new relay categories that will compliment an already full and exciting programme.

This year Galway Bay FM increased drastically their coverage of Community Games results from the Three National Finals weekends. With over 30 separate reports from John Mulligan alone and an hour long feature program on the County's

achievements we have seen an increased awareness of the games in many areas. With 44 affiliated areas last year and interest from some new areas this year we hope to continue to grow even more this year. We can boast that we have bucked the trend of other counties who have seen participation levels fall, as we saw increases in most events last year. Our one weakness has been in team events where numbers are small despite huge success by all Galway teams in Connaught and National Finals.



Dermot McNamara with local National Winners.

We are extremely pleased with all those who participated at the National Finals over the past year with Galway being one of the Top Counties in the medal count across all disciplines. However, we can feel even prouder that as a general rule the children who have competed for Galway have been held in very high esteem by all at the finals because of their exemplary behaviour and their enthusiasm for the games. It is a well known fact that we in Galway hold the belief that children who compete in any sport or other event on behalf of their areas and parishes are all winners. There surely can be no greater honour than to represent your parish in whatever event that you participate in.

We would like to say a special thank you to all our volunteers and our officials who have worked so hard on behalf of the children and we hope that this will continue in these difficult economic times where it is now even more important to promote strong sporting cultural and intellectual competition for our youth and to ensure that they remain in a health state of mind and body for the tough days ahead. We pay tribute once again to all our participants and we wish you all continued success in your chosen disciplines.

# The 10th Fields of Athenry 10km – Personal Memories

James Lundon

I keep thinking that I won't forget but I've already forgotten more about the 9 previous runnings of The Fields than I care to remember (mixing my metaphors very badly, sorry). I regret not writing down a few words after each year's race – in its immediate aftermath – to jog my memory and to aid with various timelines below but it's already too late on that score. The years have melted(!) into each other, a bit too much for my liking, but not quickly enough to forget the multiple race postponements over the last two years, much to the chagrin of the organisers, especially Alan Burke as race director both times.

We started out in 2002 down in St. Mary's in Carnaun with 68 hardy souls. The course was a bit short but we recovered! We have all learnt much about course measurement in the intervening years. The race was organised in an era before civilian GPS, chip timing and wide-scale digital photography. Early on, no one was able to come up to us afterwards to complain about the course being short or that their time was wrong or that the light was wrong for their digital camera or... I do possess one 35mm i.e. 6" by 4" picture of myself presenting Paul McNamara with the winning Galway Crystal vase – yes, it's been there since the very beginning and still very much is. I also had a lot more hair back then too!( Mick Rice was too shy to – still is! – step into that photograph so I had to do the needful on his behalf. Not sure what the other organiser, Peter Delmer, was doing at that stage either. All other photos of the race I have are foggy as the prize giving and race teas were held in the conference room of the GAA clubhouse and my camera wasn't properly warmed up beforehand. We were honoured by the appearance of Willie Morris that morning and there is a photo of him finishing. At least eight who finished that day will hopefully line up for their 10th Fields in a row today, which is a fair achievement given the attrition rate that road running can have on the heart and mind and limbs of its participants. Both Johnny and Ray O'Connor were of very substantial help that first year too and have continued to be so over the intervening period.

Carnaun was the venue for the next four years but to increasingly large numbers of finishers (171 -> 253 -> 351). The course was still slightly short the second year but was a proper 10km by year three as we had gotten the experts in to measure it correctly by then. This meant that the start was much closer (135 metres...ahem!) to the club house than in 2002. It was a close run thing on 2004 when it snowed on Christmas Day but we had a miraculous thaw on St. Stephen's

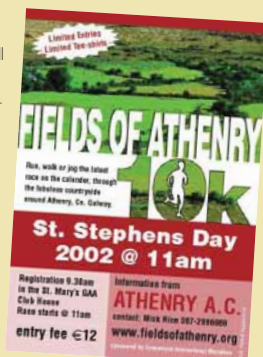


Day to allow the event start at the now sacrosanct 11AM. The event was still being hand timed and this worked OK as finishers were spread out enough to allow this take place without incident. Video and digital technology was catching on, though I don't think I've a finish line video before 2007. The first Garmins were spotted but were the size of small houses on such early adapters' hands – not conducive to fast running I would imagine. Are they really much better nowadays?

My memories of those middle years out in Carnaun are depressingly hazy – must be all the heavy pounding I've been subjecting myself to in the meanwhile. I do have to make special mention of Mike and Kathleen Forde for the kind use of their fields across from the GAA clubhouse, for overflow car parking, as I do the GAA club in Athenry for their continued use of their facilities thought these 'Wonder Years.' I clearly remember hearing about the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami on that race day and the club donated some of that year's profits to the resulting GOAL appeal.

Eventually a decision had to be made about moving to a bigger venue as the numbers entering the race had gotten to bit too big to be dealt with adequately in Carnaun. The move happened in 2006 when we were kindly given the use of the Presentation College Athenry campus near the famous North Gate in the town itself. Previously races ran through the arch, now they stopped at it. This saw the race grow to 617 finishers and the space afforded by the PCA hall was much needed. We are extremely grateful for their continued support in the intervening years.

By then the hat had become a no-brainer for the organisers as a runner's goodie bag. Crystal (exclusively Galway to date but we are not locked into that maker) was always the only prize of choice for us when rewarding winners but the hat wasn't always a given. We did a maroon t-shirt the first year – how many still



have theirs intact? We did do a Blue hat in year two – I note that Dermot McNamara still proudly dons his at club and county events. How on earth we plumped for a maroon plastic travel mug in year three is lost in the mists of time, thankfully so! I could probably find out by perusing my e-mail but it's hardly worth the effort! After that, it's been hats of all sorts, in sequence:

2005: Maroon hat; 2006: Light Grey hat (this remains my favourite); 2007: Green hat; 2008: Dark Grey with black trim beanie; 2009: Red with black & white beanie; 2010: Orange with black trim beanie. Two thousand and eleven will be a Dark Blue with black trim beanie.

The Fields booklet was inaugurated in 2005, after I saw a very basic effort being produced by the Dunshaughlin 10km organisers – Paddy Mangan in particular – earlier that summer. This is the race's 7th in a row since then. All are available on [www.athenryac.com](http://www.athenryac.com) as PDF documents. Johnny O'Connor, take a bow, for the superb typesetting and design job etc! The first booklet was done in the same year that the club got its first web site and I felt it an appropriate addition to the wordsmithing that the club was producing even back then in the way of reports and other written communication. I do not trust the web to survive that of the written word put on a real page; this is my way of proving it.

All pre-entries were accepted by post in the early days with no on-line entries accepted until 2008 via [www.runireland.com](http://www.runireland.com). Postal entries added a pretty major administrative overhead to the race until the race went on-line but this drove a further massive increase in entries. I really liked receiving postal entries in the early days. There is something very comforting and old-fashioned about paper which is sadly lacking in the Internet age amongst younger people. We received no postal entries of any sort in 2011. How quickly times have changed!

The race had 838 finishers in 2008 and suddenly we realised we were truly in the middle of a running boom. We also realised that we could not do without chip timing, something I had did my very best to stave off up to that point. The spike of fun-runner finishers was in the 45 to 55 minute range and this caused the finish line personnel major problems which resulted in runners having to queue up behind the line during this rush-hour. Very embarrassing for a race that prided itself on its efficient organisation! We also introduced a top-50 finisher technical top prize that year, overtly imitating Ballycotton's top-100 finisher top – I don't imagine John Walshe is too upset. This has been a big hit with sub-40 minute club runners. The first juvenile race took place in 2007 and has become very popular with local youngsters. This event is organised exclusively by the juvenile section of Athenry AC.

Red Tag Timing and John Cunniffe came on board in 2009, which also turned out to be the year of the two postponements due to very severe weather conditions around the turn of the year. The race eventually got off with a substantially reduced field in late-January 2010. It was the first time that someone other than Mick Rice was Race Director too, with Alan Burke having the unenviable task of pulling the race plug twice. We

had gotten away with it in 2004 but not in 2009. We were prepared for all eventualities in 2010 when we could not proceed on St. Stephen's Day for the second year in a row. This time, much more advanced notice was given, to universal convenience.

Both the 2009 and 2010 events took place over our back-up course, which is technically known as the "National 10km" course: it starts near the entrance to 'Byrne Mech' and finishes outside ADC house but, importantly, takes the railway line totally out of play, something that isn't possible to do on any date other than our usual race day – there being no train scheduled on St. Stephen's Day. It was the course used when we were honoured with the staging of the National 10km in April 2008. In both 2009 and last year the race sold out beforehand but a limited number of entries were accepted on the day due to deferrals and refunds.

We retain nine stalwarts, though I'd told that one of them will be unavoidably absent this year. They are listed elsewhere here and have been given free entry to the race for the last four years as a reward and will for as long as they continue to be Fields ever-presents. Most are very well known on the road racing circuit in Galway and no further mention needs to be made of their status, other than to hope that they make it around the course in one piece again this year.

The race has come a long way since its humble beginning in 2002 but I feel that it's retained its soul all along the way. Certainly, the punters seem to agree as it's now one of the pillar races in the Galway road racing calendar and, I feel, is a direct descendent of the mythical 10km/half marathon out in Carraroe which ran for a good part of the 90s on the same date as the Fields does. It attracted a hard core of road runners at a time when the sport was at a low point in the aftermath of the first Irish running boom of the early- to mid-80s.

Many other people have made the race what it is and I'm afraid of mentioning them all for fear of missing out on someone but special mention must be made of a few other people who've been there since almost the very beginning or who have either run or made the race what it is today, including Gary Doherty (ran the first year but has helped every year since), Martin V. McDonagh (get well soon and a semi-stalwart of the race) as well as the other four semi-stalwarts, two of whom missed the first year (Gabriel Gardiner and Noreen Doherty) and the other two (John Reilly and Gerry Rohan) who, curiously enough, missed the race in 2004.

Gary Thornton (GCH) has won the event five of the 9 times it's been run, dipping under "30" in 2009. Lucy Brennan (Sligo AC) has won the women's event three times but does not hold the course record, which goes to Teresa McGloin who ran 35:17 in 2009.

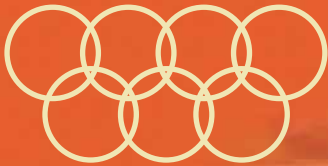
Finally, special mention must be made of the fact that this is Athenry AC (Senior)'s club race and most of the income that the club makes in the year now comes from this race, so it's doubly important to the club that it goes well as otherwise the club may go hungry the year after.





# ATHENRY A.C.

## Athletics for all



*for Olympians*

*for Fun &  
Competition*

*Club run EVERY Saturday morning  
9am and Regular midweek runs*

*contact:*

*Alan Burke alan@athenryac.com  
087 2452130*

*Mick Rice mick@athenryac.com  
087 2896989*

*For Kids*

*Athletics for 6-9 year olds  
Vocational School gym from 7-8pm  
on Monday nights  
Contact: Lorna Holly 087 2393812*

*9 year olds upwards - All Events*

*contact:*

*Martin Hynes 087 9840741  
Sinead Healey 087 6330527*

*For Exercise  
& Fitness*

*Fit4life runs Saturday morning 10am  
Regular beginner and jogger courses  
contact: Maeve Noone 087 7648343  
Deirdre Quinn 086 8821976*

[www.athenryac.com](http://www.athenryac.com)



SARAH THORNTON  
PERSONAL TRAINING

**GET BETTER FITNESS  
RESULTS... FASTER!**

**GENERAL FITNESS  
WEIGHT-LOSS  
STRENGTHEN & TONE  
SPORT-SPECIFIC  
NUTRITION ADVICE**

**Your health is your priority...  
Book your sessions now!**

Contact Sarah on 091 443133  
[www.sarahthorntonpt.com](http://www.sarahthorntonpt.com)

# THE FIELDS BAR

*Trad Session  
Every Thursday*

*All Live Sports  
on Big Screen*

OLD CHURCH STREET, ATHENRY.  
T: 091 875918

## Kevin Burke Tyres Ltd

Athenry, Co. Galway: Tel: 091 845329 • Galway Tel: 091 769636

[www.kevinburketyres.ie](http://www.kevinburketyres.ie)

Sole importers of

 **starmaxx**<sup>®</sup>



**BANDENMARKT**

 **starmaxx**<sup>®</sup>

We would like to wish all our customers a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

Thank you for your custom in 2011 and we look forward to meeting your requirements in the New Year

 **starmaxx**<sup>®</sup>  
Ice Gripper W810

Agents for

# MILE 20



DARE 2B

SIBODS  
ZOOZ  
SPORTS



091 - 700 333

Unit 1, Addley Pk, Lisbán Ind Est, Tuam Road, Galway.

## Jane-Ann Meehan

Chartered Physiotherapist & Athletics Specialist

BSc Hons, MSc Sports Medicine, MISCP, CPSM, Athletics Ireland Carded Team

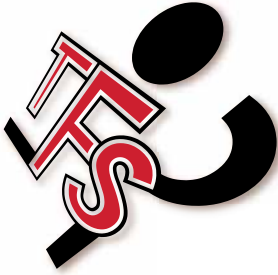
The Surgery  
Caheroyne  
Athenry  
Co. Galway

Mobile: 087/3143240

E-mail: ja\_healy02@yahoo.com



# Gym Sports & Health Complex



# TOTAL

## Fitness Solutions

Total Fitness Solutions is a brand new Gym, Workout and Sports Injury Treatment Facility, opening in Airglooney Business Park, in Tuam on the 12th November 2010. We offer personal training, group training, cryo-therapy, sauna, team performance, a boxing ring and gym, to name but a few of our excellent facilities & services.

**Call in and see for yourself**

Airglooney Business Park,  
Ballygaddy Road, Tuam, Co. Galway, Ireland.  
Phone: +353(0)93 52112  
Email: [info@totalfitnesssolutions.ie](mailto:info@totalfitnesssolutions.ie)

# Colm Mac Eoin & Co. Solicitors

*Clarinbridge, Co. Galway*  
*Phone: (091) 776384*



# TriBikes

BIKE & TRIATHLON STORE

*Wishing all our customers a Happy Christmas  
and injury free New Year.*

*Loughrea 091 880570 and Limerick 061484923.*

[www.tribikes.ie](http://www.tribikes.ie)

GOURMET COFFEE  
*O'Brien's*<sup>®</sup>  
HANDCUT SANDWICHES

*Sandwich Bars  
(Liosban and Mervue)*  
proud to support Athenry AC  
and the Fields 10km.

**We offer a catering service  
with free delivery to your  
business in Galway?**

Next time you have a meeting  
or a presentation, let us do the lunch!

*Call (091) 380 890 for a brochure.*

## Craughwell 10 Mile ROAD RACE

March 18th 2012

at 1:00PM

Entry Fee: €20 before Feb 20th

Registration: [www.runireland.com](http://www.runireland.com)

- Prizes and category prizes
- AA1 officially measured course
- Fast flat route
- Ample refreshments at finish
- Mixed team event
- Limited edition t-shirts for first 25 men and women

Website: [www.craughwellac.com](http://www.craughwellac.com)

Contact: [peterosullivan@eircom.ie](mailto:peterosullivan@eircom.ie)





**SUPPORTING THE FIELDS OF ATHENRY 10k**



**amphibian  
king**

**TECHNICAL RUNNING SHOE SPECIALISTS**

*Life's too short to be running in the wrong shoe!*

15% Off all Saucony, Brooks and Asics clothing on presentation of this voucher.  
(valid until end of January 2012).  
Returning customers may avail of €10 off their new shoes in addition to the voucher.

**ALL LEADING RUNNING BRANDS STOCKED**



**5 Howley Sq.  
Main Street  
Oranmore**

**WE PROMISE TO-**

- EXPERTLY ASSESS YOUR UNIQUE RUNNING GAIT
- RECOMMEND THE PERFECT SHOES FOR YOU
- PROVIDE SUPER COMFORTABLE RUNNERS
- HELP KEEP YOU INJURY FREE



**091 388793**



**@amphkingwest**



**Amphibian King**

**Why not email or call  
now to book your  
assessment?**



**galway@amphibianking.ie**



**www.amphibianking.ie**

†Voucher expires 31st March 2011