

# Athenry Athletic Club – Senior Section

## Annual Report 2005

### A Great Year for the Club!

For all sorts of reasons 2005 was a good year for Athenry AC. The club continued to grow both in terms of numbers and participation. One way that this increased support of the Club can be seen is in the numbers attending the Saturday morning training run. It's quite usual nowadays for eight or nine runners to assemble on Saturday mornings for a few friendly miles. Some week soon we're even hoping that Ray O'Connor might show up; but we don't want to get our hopes up too high.

### Running All Over The Place

The summer of 2005 saw a great series of road races all over the West of Ireland with Athenry athletes present at the vast majority of them. From a fine summer's evening in Dundrum to a blustery autumn Sunday in Hollymount, runners in the maroon and white singlet of Athenry rejoiced to the refrain of "...come on Mullingar". It's almost gone beyond a joke at this stage.



### Success At Last!

As well as the pure joy of taking part in training and races we also had our fair share of competitive success. The year got off to a great start at the end of April when Paul McNamara won the senior club's first ever national title on the roads in winning the National 10K Championships in Limerick. This championship was also notable as being the first ever AAI event to accept cattle as official entrants. Reports suggest that quite a number of our four-legged bovine friends mingled with the runners along the route. If you wrote that in a play people would think it was far fetched.



### Suffering for the Cause

Our members can normally be relied upon to compete in their fair share of marathons during any given twelve-month period.

Our long-distance men and women competed at home and abroad with distinction. Most notable amongst our many marathon specialists this year was surely Ray O'Connor who 'hit the wall' six times in twelve months. He's probably the only man in the world to have vomited in Belfast, London, Edinburgh, Longford, Dublin and New York during the last year. Well-done Ray!

### No Need For Speed!

At the other end of the distance spectrum, Paul Hession plowed a lonely furrow as the Club's leading 200m runner. Despite being advised numerous times by the Club's foremost running 'experts' to move up to the ultra-marathon, Paul continued to take his own advice. As a result Mr. Hession has had to be content with running at some far-flung locations, including Helsinki, during 2005. Let this be a lesson to all of us!



### Daze at The Races

Some of the most enjoyable times during this last year have been at the many quality races that are organised throughout the country. The

experience of entering and running the 'Streets of Galway' on your own just doesn't compare in quality to having fifteen team mates at the same event to complain to about your running injuries.



In fairness many of our runners significantly improved upon their various personal best performances at races over the summer and Peter Delmer made the greatest improvements of all. Peter's 10k time of 35:34 in Claregalway was the culmination of a series of strong runs over the summer months. There's surely more to come in 2006.

### A Marathon 'Virgin' No More

Another significant performance during the last year was in Longford where James Landon broke his marathon 'duck'. On light training James ran a fine race to complete the course in 3:50:18. Despite having a tough time over the last few miles of that race James has recovered himself well and is training very hard for a second run over the classic distance in Connemara next March. Let's all that hope he has more to say for himself in Maam Cross than he did after crossing the line in Longford last August.



### Bridget-Anne On Song

Despite being torn between choir practice and semi-professional athletics, Bridget-Anne Walsh came home first in the main event of the Club's annual racing calendar. Bridget-Anne posted a fine 5,000m performance on the Dangan track and came out on top of the closely handicapped event by a clear margin. Well done Bridget-Anne!



#### Athenry AC Championship Cup Results

1<sup>st</sup> Bridget-Anne Walsh  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sebastien Locteau  
3<sup>rd</sup> Dave Dunne

#### Master's Cup Winner

1st Phillip Magnier

### A Shiny New Face For The World

Our Club was recently able to present a new and unexpectedly respectable face to the West of Ireland running community with the development and launch of our new club website ([www.athenryac.com](http://www.athenryac.com)). This new resource for the club has already proven invaluable in terms of organising our race at Christmas and generally streamlining communications amongst members. We all owe a sincere vote of thanks to Alan Burke for single-handedly developing and maintaining this fantastic shop-window for the club's activities.



We try to keep the new site up to date with all of the latest news and results. The site has attracted praise from all quarters and is a genuine credit to the club.

Alan has asked me to point out that he's also available for jobs for which he actually gets paid.

## Dates for Your Diary

In case all of this reminiscing has whetted your appetite for more adventures on the road or track, here are some notable dates for your 2006 running diary.

### **February**

Sat 11<sup>th</sup> – Connaught Indoor Champs  
Sun 12<sup>th</sup> – Inter/Masters Cross Country  
Sun 25<sup>th</sup> – AAI Inter Clubs Cross Country

### **March**

Sun 5<sup>th</sup> – Ballycotton '10'  
Sun 12<sup>th</sup> – Adare 10k  
Sun 26<sup>th</sup> – Connemara Marathon Races

### **April**

Sun 2<sup>nd</sup> – Quilty Four Miler  
Sat 8<sup>th</sup> – Plassey 10K (Limerick)  
Sun 9<sup>th</sup> – Kilnaboy 10 Mile  
Sun 23<sup>rd</sup> – AAI 10K Road Champs (Carlow)

### **May**

1<sup>st</sup> – Belfast Marathon

### **June**

Sun 4<sup>th</sup> – Connaught T&F Championships  
Mon 5<sup>th</sup> – Women's Mini Marathon

### **July**

Sat 22<sup>nd</sup>/Sun 23<sup>rd</sup> – National T&F Championships

### **August**

Sat 12<sup>th</sup> – Streets of Galway 8K  
Sun 13<sup>th</sup> – National Masters T&F  
Sun 27<sup>th</sup> – Longford Marathon

### **September**

Sun 3<sup>rd</sup> – AAI Half Marathon (Letterkenny)

### **October**

Sun 1<sup>st</sup> – Cork to Cobh 15 Miler  
Sun 1<sup>st</sup> – Galway Novice Cross Country  
Mon 30<sup>th</sup> – Dublin City Marathon

### **November**

Sun 12<sup>th</sup> – Galway Senior/Junior Cross Country  
Sun 12<sup>th</sup> – Hollymount 10K  
Sun 26<sup>th</sup> – AAI Inter Counties Cross Country

### **December**

Sun 10<sup>th</sup> – AAI Novice Cross Country

## Athenry 'Oscars'

And finally, a few awards which might reflect upon the achievements of our diverse membership over the last year.

The Greta Garbo 'I Want To Be Alone' Award for Special Communication Skills goes to **James Landon** for his performance after the Longford Marathon.

The Ben Johnston 'From the Blocks' Award for the fastest start to a race this year goes to **Joe Morrissey** for his first five hundred meters in the Balla 8k. Fleeting impressive Joe ☺



The Kofi Annan Award for Services to International Running Relations is awarded to **Sebastien Locteau** for turning out for a Sunday Cross Country race, on a Saturday.

The Horseracing Ireland Award for Best New Hurdler goes to Philip Magnier. Ask no more!

Last but not least, the Roy Keane Award for a Special Contribution to Physiotherapy goes to jointly to Dave Dunne and Peter Delmer. They currently have at least two good legs between them, but not two each.