

# Athenry AC

## Modelling\* the New Jacket!



From left to right:

Michael Duane, Frank Burke, Aoife Callan, Frances Leahy, Kenneth O'Hara,  
Mairéad Blake, John Conway

Photo by John O'Connor

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\* The very same athletes will model for our swimsuit edition, coming soon.

# Faces at the Fields 10k, Dec 2018

*Text and photos by Philip Magnier*



## **Judith Roche W65: Silver with 56:47**

Judith started walking with husband Liam 20 years ago when suffering from back pain but got fed up with it so, with her competitive nature, started running and discovered a passion.

She hails from Portlaoise and Dublin but has lived 30 years in Ballinsloe. She's a member of Loughrea AC and cites TJ Beatty\* as an inspirational mentor along with Mary Barrett ("She deserves every accolade"). She's also been inspired by Catherine McKiernan's autobiography and her seminars.

Judith runs three times a week. She's done the Dublin Marathon 10 times (winning category medals) and also Longford, NY, and London, She has even set an indoor Irish record at 1500m for her age category.

"The W70 category is not too far off now and I'll run with Loughrea for as long as I'm blessed to do so!"

*\* Editor: You know him, the old geezer.*

## **Carmel Coyne W45: Gold with 45:49**

Carmel loves the Fields 10k race, "a real Galway race and a family event". A Shantalla girl, she has worked as an Aer Lingus flight attendant for over 23 years. Like many there, she partied a lot over the years but one day she saw people running and just decided she wanted a lifestyle change. "Running is downtime for yourself without a phone".

She also does triathlons—including Ironmans—after fracturing a leg in 2017. In October, she'll do the Barcelona Ironman again followed four weeks later by the NY marathon. Then back to being a runner exclusively.

Her best for the marathon is 3:36. She needs to do Berlin and Tokyo to complete the Big 6 (the others are Boston, London, Chicago and NY).

Her proudest achievements are: i) actually getting into the water in her first aquathon in Salthill while crying from tension and ii) running Boston after watching it the year of the bombing and vowing to do it.



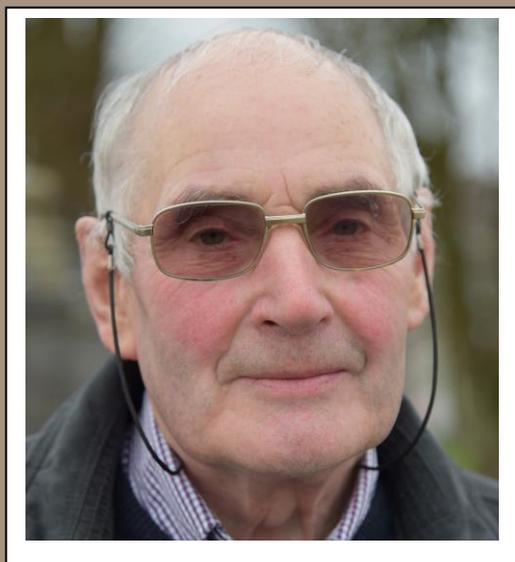
## **Tom Newell M75: Silver with 67:15**

Tom comes from Annaghdown, County Galway and has been running since 1972, when he was in his late 20s. He doesn't belong to a club but "runs for myself".

He started with the Galway Bay 10 miles and then did the Tuam 5k over 30 years ago. He has also done the 10k there and the half marathon. He used to be involved with community games locally.

Tom trains once a week, and also cycles in the summertime. He has participated in the Tour de Lough Corrib in June. This is the biggest charity cycle in the West of Ireland.

He does it "for enjoyment, I am not competitive". He admits to being addicted though. His best time for the 10k is 56 min and was chuffed to receive a cheque for the Streets of Galway 8k in 2018.



### **Hirohiko Katayama M60: Silver with 47:11**

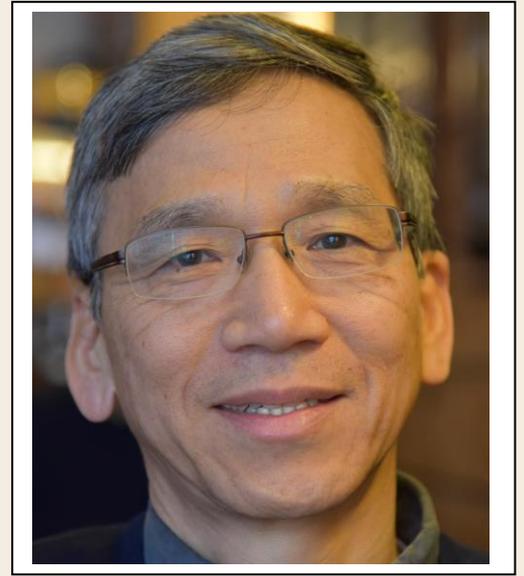
Hiro is originally from Kobe but lives in Tokya. Except, that is, when he is taking a year to do *International Human Rights* at NUIG: "a good program". He's glad he picked Galway over a big city like Dublin.

He entered the Fields 10k after hearing about it from his landlord but he hadn't realised there would be no public transport on Stephen's Day: this does not happen in Japan! After posting on FB, he was grateful when Kieran Walsh picked him up on the morning of the race.

He's frank about the importance of running in his life. Ten years ago he couldn't sleep from stress at work, resulting in exhaustion and depression. "Running saved me", he says. Hiro worked in management for a chemical company for 40 years and is now retired.

With more free time comes higher mileage in training, now up to 150k per month, getting out there 3-4 days per week.

He's run 28 marathons, his favourite distance, mainly in Japan. Among them are Boston (2013, the year of the bomb), NY, Seoul, Galway Bay. At 26, he did 2:45. And Dingle is booked for later this year!



### **Frank Power M65: Gold with 47:38**

From Kilkenny, Frank came to Galway in 2002. He lives in Ballinderreen and serves on the South Galway AC committee. He has been the race director for their 10k in Ballinderreen, held around November each year.

Frank started running at 35, "nobody ran then". His personal bests include 2:57 in the Dublin Marathon and 37 minutes for 10k. He rains three or four nights a week and once at the weekend.

Frank ran 22:06 in the Athenry leg of the 5k series this year, a fine time for his age (66). Claregalway runner Andy Talbot is in the same age category and does very similar times so no doubt they are the best of rivals!

When living in Dublin Frank's club had annual fun training runs in Connemara, coming down by coach. He participated in our Athenry one from Luisburg to Leenane this Spring (despite a horrendous storm the night before) and left many a younger rival in his wake in the process.



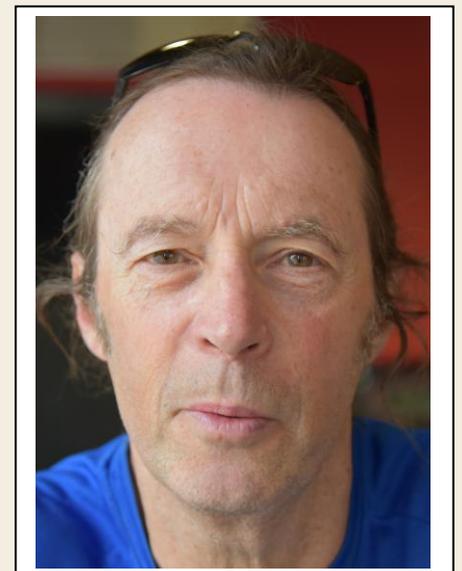
### **Vinnie Clohisey M65: Silver with 49:06**

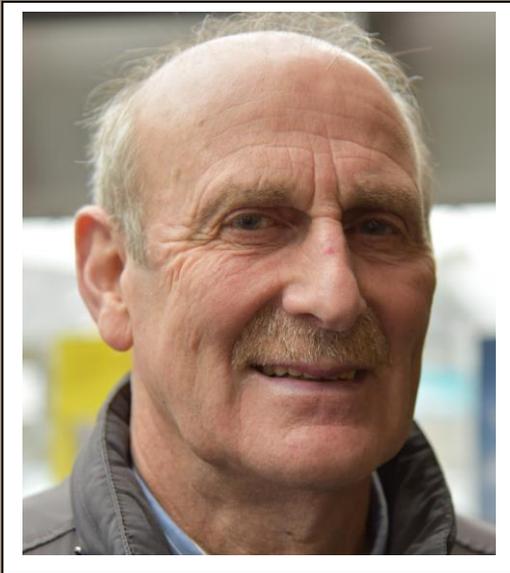
A Dub, Vinnie has close ties with the West. His favourite county is Clare, and he's competed in the Fields for the past eight years along with son Mick, our perennial winner. "It's an annual pilgrimage to get out of the Pale after Christmas." Over the years, he trained extensively with his son...and then Mick turned 12!

Another connection with Athenry: In the Civic Service years ago, Vinnie represented management while the union rep. was our own Mick Rice, no doubt a stimulating experience for both.

Running for 33 years now, he's trained mostly on his own, however he has good memories of running in Trinity with work colleagues over lunchtime. "What I did was a great balance, a de-stresser, and of course there's the social aspect, the fitness and well being."

Vinnie is an accomplished musician and has two solo CDs out there.





### **Martin Hynes M70: Gold with 53:22**

A stalwart of the Connacht running scene, Martin is from Tuam and now returned there (and a member of Tuam AC) but he also lived in Dublin for a long time. He started running in 1970 after meeting a few lads and his first race was in Claremorris.

Martin played in the Garda band for years and was subsequently on the beat with the guards also.

He still gets out there for a run nearly every day with just the odd day off. He sometimes trains for as long as two hours but on his own now.

In 2018, Martin won the National Road 10k in the Phoenix Park in the M70 category with 52:00.

His personal best is around 33 mins for 10k, achieved in the Dunboyne race, he was 3rd at M40 that year. For the marathon his PB is 2:53, with 1:15 for the half.

## **Athletics Ireland: Galway County Board 2018 Athletic Award Winners**

**Female 12-15 years old** – Emma Moore (GCH)

**Male 12-15 years old** – shared: Daragh Jennings (GCH) and Darragh Fahy (Loughrea AC)

**Female 16-19 years old** – Laura Cunningham (Craughwell AC)

**Male 16-19 years old** – Robert McDonnell (GCH)

**Female Junior** – Aoife Sheehy (GCH)

**Male Junior** – Jack Dempsey (GCH)

**Female Senior** – Nicole Walsh (GCH)

**Male Senior** – Sean Breathnach (GCH)

**Female Master** – Mary Barrett (Loughrea AC)

**Male Master** – Ian Egan (Castlegar AC)

**Team** – South Galway AC U14 Boys Relay Team (Andrew Horan, David Mannion, Ruairí Dillon, Stephen Mannion, Shane Cassidy, Rian Dunne Leavy)

**Coach** – Brendan Glynn (GCH)

**Outstanding Contribution** – Eamonn O'Donnell (GCH) and Andrew Talbot (Clare River Harriers and Pearse AC)

**Hall of Fame** – Christine Kennedy and Mick Molloy

**Special Contribution Award** – The Finnegan Family (Craughwell AC)



Andrew Talbot & a Pearse AC crew from 1974, and much more recently after a local race

# Q&A with Adam Leadbetter

## **You set up both the Speed and Tempo sessions, you have a strong background in running?**

Yeah, starting in high school, we did cross country, 1500 metres. We were coached there. I didn't really do much at university.

## **Did you win anything at school?**

No, I was always at the back, wondering why I was in the races!

## **So there was an improvement?**

Yeah, I really didn't start again until my late 20s. The club I joined in England is called Spectrum Striders. We were half way between Liverpool and Manchester.

## **You were born around there?**

Yes, it used to be Lancashire and is now Cheshire. So I grew up on The Wirral, then went to university in Norwich.

## **So you started again in your late 20s?**

Yes, we had a really good club, back in Warrington, a similar number to Athenry. We had similar sessions, speed sessions and things like that. Didn't really have a tempo session, it was more of a fun run, you did it at your own pace. There would be three or four points round the course, you'd come back to a designated back marker. The back marker would change and you'd go off again. The quicker runners would maybe do twice as far as others. There were a few guys with a similar standard to me, I found that really helpful. You could push off each other.

There are a lot of club competitions, we would have gone to that...

## **...clubs versus clubs?**

Yeah, cross country, fell running, about 45 mins. to the fell races.

## **Tell us about fell running.**

It's mountain racing in Ireland. With three other clubs locally, we'd have grand prix at designated races. Fell racing is really low key, there's a race on nearly every day of the year. You'd go out on Wednesday night to the hills of Lancashire or Yorkshire, turn up at a pub, give a guy five pounds at a table, get a race number, go off and run in the hills for an hour or so, come back have a pint and go home again.

## **Is there an orienteering element?**

Some of them have an orienteering element to them. A lot of the courses we did were marked, every 500 metres or so with a bit of tape. One of the big races every year is the fell relays, so the club goes and does the relay with short and longer legs, there's a changeover pen and I was in there with people who had run for Great Britain, on the mountains. Rod Jebb for instance, no body outside of the fell community would have heard of him. He's run for GB and he's set records, course records on big trail races in Europe as well. One of the best [fell] runners in the World. And a guy called Josh Naylor, he's in his 80s now, in the 1970s, 80s, he was a real pioneer, in the races in the Lake District. We also had a North Cheshire park series.

## **The standard was pretty good?**

The standard was like Athenry, there were bigger clubs around, Sale Harriers, Manchester. Once at the Liverpool CC races, a selection race for the Europeans, Mo Farah turned up!

## **Were you doing track and road work as well?**

Yeah, I did my first marathon in 2009, first one I did 3:28. My best is 2:56 in Galway Bay, not too windy, I did 2:57 in London as well.

## **What's your favourite distance?**

I really like doing the half marathon. If something goes wrong, you've got a bit of time to adjust. You don't have to worry about



fuel like you do with a marathon. 50k as well, I've done several. I've done Portumna twice.

## **How long have you been with the club?**

Four years. I came here with work. I was working in Liverpool, a job came up in the Marine Institute. My wife works in Oranmore, doing science and art classes with children. My kids are 7 and 5.

## **You're learning Irish with the kids?!**

Yes, we've both been trying, there's a really good app for Irish, Duolingo, there are more people learning Irish through that app than there are people in Ireland!

## **What were your PBs before you came here?**

18:25 was my 5k, 1:22 I think for the half marathon, 2:59 for the marathon. Now for the 5k, it's in the 17:30s...

## **...so what happened, you got more training in?**

Yeah. I actually run to work now, 4.5k each way, pretty good intensity. And there's two or three of us down at work, one is an ironman triathlete, we go out once or twice weekly. Having a good structured session on a Tuesday. My half came down to 1:20:11.

## **Did you ever do any courses in coaching?**

I haven't as yet but I'm doing one soon. With Paul McNamara. That will be a day long. Something I like doing, once I've done the first one, I can build up a bit, pass on the knowledge a bit.

## **Are you injured at the moment?**

I should be back next week, or the week after. Too much sitting I think, at work! I go to Therese in Oranmore, she used to be a 400 metre hurdler. I was injured early in the year also. I've done quite a bit of travel this year, I have to go to Europe quite a lot.

## **So how do you see your future career?**

As a runner?! In September I'll be in the over 40 category. I'd love to do the EcoTrail Wicklow in September, starts in Bray and then it goes to Glendalough, Powerscourt, then back down again. There's a race in France, UTMB. Aoife did the marathon race there, there's also a 100k, the CCC, that would be a few years away. And I'd really like to do the Boston Marathon as well: 3:15 qualifying time for over 40. Those are the bucket list.

## **Do you hold with the heart rate training?**

I just do what I feel. I don't particularly want to over complicate it. I just enjoy running. That's what I like in the club.

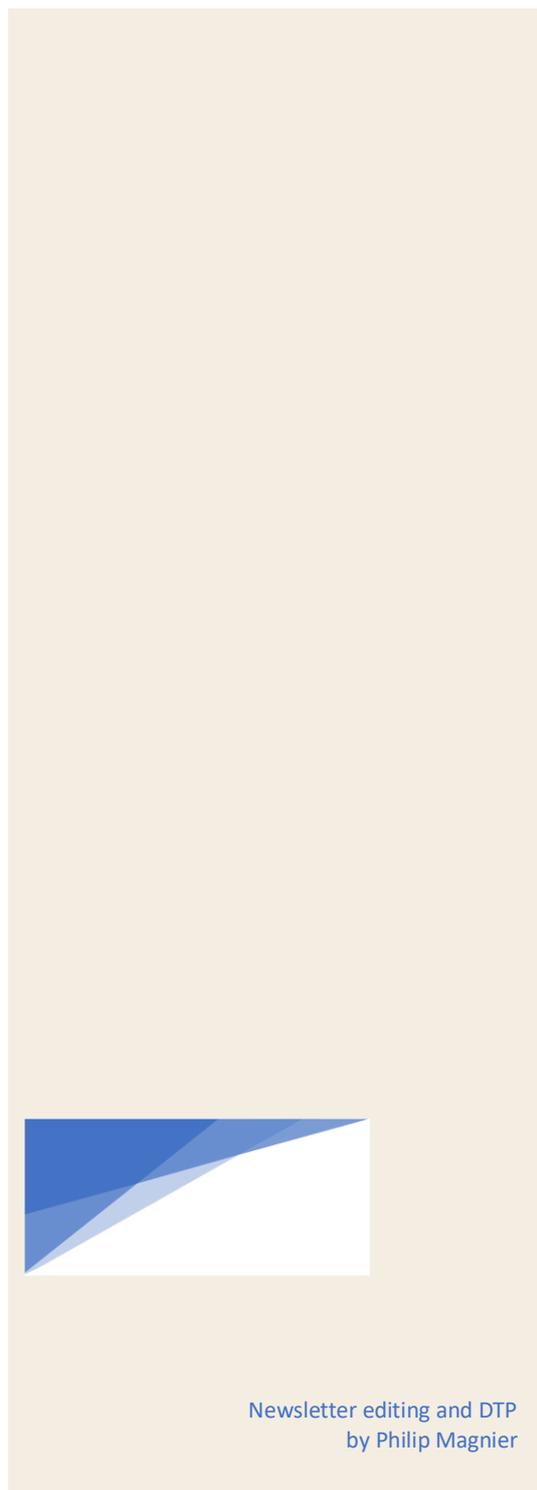
# Galway 5k Series 2019

*See a collage of the 2019 series compiled with photos from the one and only John O'Connor overleaf.*

*Below are the stalwarts of the series overall, having now completed their 14<sup>th</sup> year. Note that the races used to be over four legs in 2006, expanding to five in 2007, and up to the current six in 2008. You can find other interesting data and ALL race results at <http://www.5km.ie/>.*

## Galway 5k Series Stalwarts, end of June 2019

Gary Doherty	81 races run (out of 81 total)
Tony O'Callaghan	81
Adrian Fitzmaurice	80 races run plus one attendance as a helper in 2008.
James Lundon	78
Jim Maher	77
Tony Nevin	73
Martin Keane	71
Peadar Nugent	69
Alan Burke	66





**5k Series, 2019.** Photos by John O'Connor

# Blast from the Past

*Our club championships over the years has undergone several metaphorphoses. The first was in Renville Park, Oranmore, followed by a couple in Dangan track, then on in 2006 to a loop course in Newcastle. A small photo collage from 2006/2007 is overleaf. Also part of that collage are photos from the Twilight Meet, 2006. Remarkably, Athenry hosted an international track meeting in that year. See directly below an article, written by Mick Rice in 2007.*

## Remembering Isaac by Mick Rice

In July last year Athenry AC undertook one of its biggest ever projects in organising the **High5 Galway Twilight Track and Field Meet**. Entries were accepted from athletes of all standards and from many parts. Some of the best British athletes around mixed on the day with the most talented runners, jumpers and throwers that Ireland had to offer. Other races on the programme provided local runners with a chance to share the limelight. The money had been found, the planning had been done and the stage was all set for a great evening's athletics under a balmy summer sky. As many of you will remember of course, on the appointed day, it lashed down soft Galway rain in big buckets all day long. What can you do? Very little, I suppose. The show must, and did, go on.



*(continued)*

News reached us this week that Isaac had finished off his 2007 season in fine style by claiming the Ugandan National Road Racing title over 20k. Isaac only turned twenty-one years of age yesterday and we wish him all the best of Galway luck in his athletics career. If by any chance anyone who is in touch with Isaac were to read this, could they please pass on our best wishes to him from the many friends he made in Galway on his visit last year and tell him that we hope to see Isaac in this part of the world at least one more time.

Postscript, 2019:

<https://www.iaaf.org/athletes/uganda/isaac-kiprop-194304>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isaac\\_Kiprop](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isaac_Kiprop)

<https://more.arrs.run/runner/26844>

A little over twelve months after the event and we still have some fine memories of that day on the track in Dangan. Foremost amongst those memories for me was the short few days around that time that I had a chance to get to know one of our star athletes, **Isaac Kiprop of Uganda**. We were very lucky to have been able to bring Isaac to run in Galway. As reigning East African Cross Country Champion Isaac was a genuine world-class athlete. We couldn't believe our luck in having him there. Isaac ran the 5,000m in Galway and proved much too strong for his competition on that day. His grace and strength as he circled the Dangan track was breathtaking. He didn't run like a mortal it looked like he was using invisible rollerblades as distance disappeared effortlessly beneath his feet. I've often been asked between then and now what has happened to Isaac in the meantime.

## Isaac Takes The Honours

As you might understand Uganda is a long way away and it's hard to keep tabs on someone's career at such a distance but encouraging news reached us in January that Isaac had won the third edition of the Bukwo Road Race in Uganda ahead of some fairly stiff competition.

In the spring came news that Isaac had qualified to compete on his national team for the 2007 IAAF World Cross Country Championships which were to be held in Mombassa, Kenya. He finished in third place in the Ugandan National Cross Country Championships behind the more established Boniface Kiprop (no relation) and Moses Kipsiro.

Conditions in the Mombassa World Championships were savage and many fine runners couldn't even complete the distance but when all the running had been completed Isaac had finished in 26th place which was a fantastic achievement. Many of you will know that this event is perhaps the toughest single foot race held worldwide each year. To cap it all off Uganda took bronze medals in the senior mens team event, something Isaac can be proud of forever. One of his colleagues Boniface Kiprop had collapsed course only yards short of the finish line while running in fourth place. Had he been able to complete Uganda would have taken silver medals. *(Continued in next column).*



## Blast from the Past: Club Champs 5k 2005/6, & Twilight Meet

Photos by Philip Magnier & various



# 20 Questions Caroline Freeney...

Surely Caroline is one of the best examples of success through perseverance in our club. After years of struggling, she did a PB of 22:47 in the 5k Series in 2019, along with a sub-4 marathon. "Joining the club was great for me I never thought of myself as a runner. I hated running in school. I would dread sports day because they would make me run in the races. It took me a good year to really start enjoying it. Joining the Fit4Life was what kept me going and the friends I have made along the way are the best friends I have today."

## 1. What shoes do you train in?

Mizuno

## 2. How many miles did you run last week?

21 miles

## 3. What's your favourite racing distance?

Half marathon

## 4. Where is your favourite place to train?

For the longer distance has to be Attymon-Kiltullagh route. Anywhere around Athenry really.

## 5. What's your favourite race or event each year?

Claregalway 10k, I have done this race every year as it's close to where I'm from and I enjoy the route.

## 6. What annoys you most about races?

Runners that stop dead in the middle of the road, it's a hazard, I have had collision experiences from this happening.

## 7. What race that you haven't run would you most like to do?

The ultra in Connemara, won't be soon but hopefully someday.

## 8. What's your best ever running performance?

Rome in April (see photo), my 9<sup>th</sup> marathon. I enjoyed the race as I felt good running it. Bar the last 6k, I was very comfortable with 3:53, a full hour faster than my first marathon and my first sub 4.



## 9. What was your worst ever running performance?

O God I could pick a few for this one. I wasn't the fastest running starting off. I was trying to get my 10k under an hour and failed miserably for so long. My first 10k was the St Stephens day run, 68 mins. The next year I thought it couldn't be worse but it was 71 mins, I think the Christmas dinner and wine didn't help!!!

## 10. What's the strangest thing you've seen on a training run?

It's more what I thought I saw. I was training for my first marathon for Dublin with Cheryl. Anyways we were getting to the end of our training and we were well sick of the long miles so we weren't in the best of form and we were running over a flyover near my home when out of the corner of my eye I saw what I thought was a black bull calf. I let out a scream and pushed Cheryl out onto the road to get away from the mad cow chasing us (lucky no car was coming). It turned out it was a black dog but we laughed about it the rest of the way home. She got me back the next week when a small cute dog, ran out from a house at us and this time she pushed me to get away.



## 11. What is your favourite piece of running gear?

My runners, I just love putting on my Mizuno.

## 12. Who would you most enjoy beating in a sprint finish?

Donna Lane. We have had a couple of sprint finishes and she would rather trip me up than let me pass her, she is a small bit competitive. Will have to wait till she is back running as she is out injured at the minute but she will be back I have no doubt.

## 13. What was the best bit of training advice you were ever given?

So much good advice from people in the club but I would have to go with Jim Leahy for the best advice he is always positive and when I was thinking about running the full in Connemara he told me about visualisation and about focusing on the end goal rather than all the training with the early mornings to get the long miles in and the training in the wind and rain. Not to mention the foam rolling which I hate. I was focused on the end results and crossing the finish line and how that would feel and the sense of achievement it would bring and he was right.

## 14. In 10 year's time, will you still be running?

I would hope so.

## 15. If for some reason you were told you could never run again, how would you react?

I would be gutted.

## 16. Have you ever been bitten by a dog while running?

No, they do frighten me, not cos I am afraid of them, more that I do be in my own world and they always seem to come out of the blue. But always just barking mad at me so far thank God.

## 17. Have you ever had to stop for an emergency "Paula" during a race?

No, never in a race but on training runs yes I have been known to jump over a gate or two.

## 18. What is your favourite post-race food?

Does a pint of Guinness count?

## 19. Your most embarrassing ever running-related moment?

Having to ask people if I can use their toilet on training runs but I should add I only go to houses where I know the people.

## 20. In your opinion, who is the greatest Irish athlete of all time?

Sonia O'Sullivan.