



ATHENRY Athletic Club

Fields of Athenry 10KM Road Race

St. Stephen's Day 2008
race programme

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Welcome

to the Fields of Athenry 10KM.

It gives the members of Athenry AC great pleasure to host this year's Fields of Athenry 10KM road race. We would like to warmly welcome each and every runner and walker to Athenry and indeed to the roads upon which most of our own training is done during the rest of the year.

It is our ambition each year to host a top-quality event that caters for runners and walkers of all standards in a safe and enjoyable atmosphere. We're particularly proud this year to welcome members of the many Fit4Life groups that have become established all over the country in recent times.

We realise that for our sport to prosper in the years ahead we have to continue to support and encourage newcomers. We sincerely hope that everyone will enjoy their race and be able to cross the finish line with a smile. If you have the time, please pass on a word of thanks to the many volunteers working on the race, who have given of their time today so that you could take part.

Thank you for supporting our race and we hope that you enjoy yourself.

Mick Rice - Field of Athenry 10KM Race Director.

An eventful year for Athenry AC draws to a close, with our traditional highlight - our own Fields of Athenry 10KM. But there has been some serious competition for the title of 'highlight' this year.

The spring 5KM series exploded in popularity, our women's team announced their arrival on the national stage and we hosted the National 10KM. Our juvenile club goes from strength to strength, and our senior club continues to attract new members, from international athletes, to people who just want to run a few miles in the company of other runners.

But it's hard to match the Olympics! For a few days, the nation focused on our own Paul Hession, and he captured the country's imagination on the biggest stage of all. The homecoming in Athenry was an incredible occasion. Paul will be around today - but he's not stepping up to the 10KM yet!

So for each of you taking to the roads today, hopefully you can meet your own goals too. And remember no matter how poor a run you might have - and we all have days like that - you did better than the person sitting on the couch at home.

Best of luck to you all.

Alan Burke - Chairman Athenry AC (Senior).

To contact Athenry AC, www.athenryac.com/contact_details

To find out more about Athenry AC's Fit4Life programme, www.athenryac.com/fit4life

To find out more about Athenry AC's Juvenile Club, www.athenryac.com/juvenile-club-ready-new-members

A Few Words on '08

Paul Hession

2008 was always going to be a special year for me after having qualified for the Olympic Games the previous year. Coming so close to getting to the Athens Games made me appreciate the enormity of it. The build-up went well and all my races pre-Beijing were going in the right direction. I just had to go out there to perform. The Olympics is on such a huge scale that it is so important to keep your feet on the ground and focus on keeping everything as normal as possible.

The whole experience is one to remember, from the great feeling of winning my quarter-final to the bitter disappointment of being one place off making an Olympic Final. It is hard to rehash in a few words but it is safe to say that I will remember it forever. I came off the track in Beijing already looking forward to the future, to London in four years time. Of course there are a quite a few competitions to run between now and then and I am already well into my preparations for next year's World Championships in Berlin. Athletics waits for no-one so you have to be continually looking forward.

I have to say a quick word of thanks to the people of Athenry, particularly our great club, for their support before the Games and their welcome home when it was all done. The amount of effort put into the posters and signs around the town makes me proud and the amount of people in The Square for the homecoming was amazing.



Finally, I would like to wish everyone involved in this year's Fields of Athenry 10KM the very best of luck. I have witnessed the growth of this race from its infancy and its success reflects the hard work that is put in behind the scenes by all involved in the organising. Well done to all!



2008 Galway May 5KM Road Race Series

A Short Report

James Landon

The series went from strength to strength in 2008 with another race added to the calendar - Claregalway got into the act for the first time this year. It is also no longer strictly a May Series as the first and last races split out into both adjacent months.

We had on-line entries for the first time and they were a huge success, with the series selling out over two weeks before the first race. Three hundred and fifty! There were many disappointed runners, who had run in previous years but who didn't hear about the new application process in time etc. These extra numbers brought a whole different set of problems to the organisers of each of the 6 races, ones which all took to heart. Each rose to the various challenges with gusto and with ultimate success.

Two hundred and eighty one officially finished in Newcastle in late April - 9 days after the National 10KM had taken place in another part of Athenry parish. At least another 10 guests(!) also ran but only those officially entered would be eligible for series t-shirts, which demanded that five or six race finishes be recorded. Again, as is now almost (touch wood!) customary for the Tuesday evenings of the series, we had dry weather for the race, not that the outlook was good in the early evening - lots of very dark clouds rolling around East Galway. The running gods smiled on our meagre efforts again!

Tuam was next and the course was different to previous years and much more difficult, with a long uphill stretch to almost the three KM mark. The start and finish were out near the old Sugar factory. A huge success.

Craughwell was bathed in late evening sunshine and over 300 [a series record] finished. Super organisation. (It was also a personal triumph for me as I beat Dave Dunne for the only time in 2008!)

Claregalway was very overcast but stayed dry as over 260 finished. The course was not easy but many reported very good times. The race started and finished at the Claregalway Community Centre. Welcome aboard, Clare River Harriers.

Loughrea was on the same excellent loop, though a bit longer than last year, for those who notice those things. The hill between three and four KM hasn't gotten any easier, or flatter! Again, we got out of town dry. Not to forget the professionally-made video that the Loughrea boys did as part of their 40th anniversary celebrations!

The GCH leg was in Dangan, with the same rules and course as previous years. We held onto our "dry" streak too. Over 250 finished and therefore 200-plus safely secured their lime green series T-shirts with 109 recorded as finishing all 6 races. The series T-shirt was, as always, expertly designed by Proactive's Johnny O'Connor. A visual genius. Many of these 210 and hangers-on retired to Kelehan's main function room for a few drinks and an informal prize-giving afterwards. After all expenses were covered, the series organisers were able to donate €4133 to the local AAI County Board to help promote and finance juvenile athletics in Galway.

Three ever-presents remain in the series, Tony O'Callaghan (Craughwell AC), Jim Maher (HP Running Club) and our own Gary Doherty. Fifteen races, fifteen finishes! Four in 2006, five in 2007, six in 2008.



Race	Finishers	# Race Ran	Count
Athenry	281	Six	109
Tuam	266	Five	101
Craughwell	308	Four	42
CRH	261	Three	34
Loughrea	224	Two	34
GCH	253	One	30



County Galway **5km Series** - 2008

Athenry 29th April ❖ Tuam 6th May ❖ Craughwell 13th May ❖ Claregalway 20th May
❖ Loughrea 27th May ❖ Galway 3rd June



Athenry AC 5k - Race 1



Tuam AC 5k - Race 2



Galway City Harriers 5k - Race 6



Craughwell AC 5k - Race 3



Clare River Harriers 5k - Race 4



Loughrea AC 5k - Race 5

Sometimes Dreams Do Come True - Chasing Mick Rice

Around DCM 2008 Elaine Walsh

The Marathon. It's over for this year, at least, and I cannot say I am sad. I am still a bit, let's say, 'surprised' by my time. I had a few dreams about the sub-three hour marathon but the dreams never seemed a reality in the cold light of day.

I joined the Athenry AC club last January, after a few consultations with Brian Bruton and Alan Burke. Ann Carter joined the club a few months before me and once she made the decision I was happy to follow. Ann and I played football together for a few years. Ann was right-half and I was left-half back. I can safely say we are both better runners than footballers.

I live near Dangan and therefore had bumped into, and eventually began regularly running with, Martin McEvilly, Brian Bruton and Kathryn Casserly. I didn't realise then that I was training with some elites!

My first run as part of the club was the cross country in Dartfield. It very nearly marked the beginning of the end. One word describes it, or maybe two - absolute torture!!!!

Then came the Connemara Half Marathon. My introduction to some of the other club members happened during the two outings to Connemara before the event. Everybody was really welcoming and friendly. On the day of the race I introduced myself to Frank Burke with less than a mile to go to the finish. I didn't know him but he was wearing the singlet. I thought 'oh great' someone from Athenry, he will help me to the finish. So I said 'Hi, I'm from Athenry club too' and he replied with a hello and a smile and then took off like a bat out of hell. He told me later that he couldn't cope with the lagging if I had beaten him. This healthy competition and the smiles and congrats at the finish line left me with no doubts about my decision to join the club.

I cannot recall how I came to the decision to enter for the Dublin marathon. I ran the Cork Marathon in 2007. In 2006 I ran the Boston marathon (illegally - I was unaware then of how much of a sin this is!). I trained alone and not very consistently. I was happy with my result in Cork but knew if I put some work in I could improve my time. I was injured for Cork 2008 and did not run despite entering. I had also planned to run the Achill Half as I had enjoyed it in



2007 but I was going through a lazy and low iron phase so did not run that either.

In June, I found myself training for the Longford Half Marathon. Two weeks after Longford came the National 'Half' in Waterford. From then until the end of October, running literally consumed my life. My boss at work (John Donnellan) and another work colleague (Paul Kilkelly) are also Athenry members and were training for Dublin, so each day we would compare how many miles we ran, at what speed etc, etc. Needless to say, all in our work mates are delighted that it is over.

The introduction of the long runs into the programme came and went without much heartache as Mick Rice organised a group run on Sunday mornings. His support, advice and encouragement in relation to training and nutrition were invaluable and to add to that the runs were good fun.

I went on holidays for a month from mid-September to mid-October, travelling around northern Spain and living in a VW transporter. The first week I attended a friend's wedding and 'rested my legs' while making up for my lost

social life. Five weeks left to the marathon. Oops! I had planned on learning to surf and had all the gear (thanks Nick) but there was no time. We drove 5500km and I ran 360km in three weeks. The terrain was either hills or sand. My times were much slower than they had been at home so I thought I was losing fitness from the socialising and my stopping and starting during the runs. These weeks training alone made me realise how important the support of others is. Ann (Carter), Jane Ann (Healy) and Brian kept me updated on what they were doing and shared advice and tips as well as moans and groans as we all went through many moments of despair.

For the people in our lives who don't run, who don't time themselves when they go for a jog, who find it difficult to understand why we are disappointed if we are a few seconds slower than anticipated but continue to support us - you deserve medals!

Back to Ireland. Two weeks to go, more advice from Mick. I did 64 miles on week one, which included the cross country race in Tuam (still have not changed my opinion on cross country!). And then the last week was a mere 22 miles in total and lots and lots of talking about running! The pre-marathon meal on the eve of the marathon was a great idea. Some of us had met up at registration but it was good to meet as a group which included the travelling supporters. I began to lose the nerves and appreciate being in a position to compete. Maurice Clarke and Maire Treasa Beatty were both unwell and the disappointment of not being able to run after months of preparation was too horrifying to contemplate.

Next morning, next step was finding Tesco on Baggot Street. A mix of tension, anticipation and excitement. It took us about 10 minutes to eventually set ourselves up for the photo. The sharing of the most personal and private (in any other circumstances) details of our bodily functions and fears flowed... We eventually dispersed and with many hugs, kisses and well wishes we were at the start.

Mick Rice was wearing green. My plan was to try to keep an eye on Mick. Off we all went running in a little cluster afraid to lose each other - Ann, Jane Ann, Dette (Carter), Val (Glavin) and Mick - 'Blessed is he amongst women!'

For me the three hours flew by, I was aware of our group changing; some people joining, others leaving. I was aware of Ann being in pain from the knee and calf injuries that had plagued her for weeks previously. It was written on her face but she never mentioned it instead replying when asked that she was fine! At mile 22 Ann had no choice but to stop running. I was nervous about meeting her when it was over as I expected her to be in the depths of depression as I would have been if the same had happened to me but Ann was how I hope I could be if the same ever happened to me: happy for everyone and glad to have experienced the 22 miles. Watch this space in 2009!

By mile 23 it was just Mick and myself. He asked, "Can you go quicker?". I thought "Are you crazy?" The last three miles were a bit surreal for me. People were pulling out injured and cramped. I was afraid to look at these individuals in case it was contagious! Alan and Peter were floating around on the bikes shouting encouragement! Mick was the perfect mentor, chatting easily and praising me. When at mile 25 I felt and said "I feel really emotional", I could hear the panic in his voice when he responded "You need to hold yourself together, there's less than a mile to go". I assume this moment defined for him some of the challenges of running with the female members of the club!

As I came around the bend into the last 100m I could see the clock - 2:59. If I had to fly at that stage I knew I was going to be in under three hours. Sometimes dreams do come true!

The finish line was an amalgamation of the weary and happy! Congrats to all and well done! Thanks to the club for the support and all the congratulations!

I know I would not be writing this if I had not joined.

Green T, Anyone?

2007 Fields of Athenry 10KM

Race Report Tony Nevin (my inner thoughts in brackets)



Another year of hard graft on the hills, fields and roads of Galway, week in week out, 5k series, 5k handicaps, 10KM races, Streets of Galway 8k, Kilimor 4m, too many to name them all but all with so many friendly faces. And friendly rivals too. Those personal goals hit and missed race after race, moving up and mixing with new people every few months all with the same aim (going faster than last time.)

So to the big day, 26/12/07, and one of my favourite events each year, Athenry on St Stephen's Day, a credit to all involved in the set-up and I must admit I played my part this year, no not in the organisation but in the 'Hat Colour' poll with quite a few more visits to the PC than may be fairly acceptable, clicking on green. Well I feel that 70 votes should count for some input to the day. (Lovely shade too) Sorry all, Craughwell colours!

I ran 41.55 last year, 12 places off a shirt, ah but surely this year I am ready to break the 40 min 10KM. What better than to do it at my favourite race in Athenry whilst as a bonus, bag me one of them exclusive top 50 Green T-shirts.

11:00 AM sharp - off and running. 3.48 to 1k - (too quick let them off). 3.49 to 2k - (oh sh*t, ease off). 3.53 to 3k - (settling in now) by now I'm in good company: Tom Hunt, David Huane & Thomas Porter (right where you need to be to break 40 minutes) seasoned sub-40 men all. 4.07 to 4k - (I feel much better now) but a 10 yard gap opened to Thomas Porter & 20 more to Tom Hunt and Dave Huane (no worries I'll pull them in on the back straight.)

4.11 to 5k - bang on target 19.49 for half way (now just up it a little and I'll catch the lads one by one.) 4.04 to 6k - (on the mark making progress so keep it up). 4:13 to 7k - (oh bo*x, what are you at?) Thomas Porter ahead by 60 yards, Tom Hunt ahead by 100 yards, not to plan at all (I can't let them go out any further if I'm to reel them in at the "sprint" for home.)

4.16 to 8k - disastrous k but Thomas Porter still in view (it's now or never to catch him, so push on!) 4.13 to 9k - (feel much better now) lungs in overdrive, heart in flying gear but on Thomas's shoulder, confidence back and off we go: it's the dash for home. (Been here before!) Thomas opens three yards, I close back in straight away (you're not getting away today Thomas) off he goes again but I'm not having any of it, straight back to him, and again just before the level crossing Porter makes his 3rd play - that's my cue, now it's my turn to test Thomas so at the level crossing I start my wind-up (I'm off) I can't hear him follow, and I never look back, now in my mind I hear the questions (where is Huane and Hunt and can I catch them?) Now, more importantly, (don't let anyone catch you) I hear footsteps as I take the ninety degree turn for the Arch but not Porter's, it's a new sound, (they might have more pace left) so I let fly, full speed ahead now I can hear the crowd cheer ahead, I don't see the clock but I'm still hopeful I will get the T-shirt.

I crossed the line in 40.22 in 53rd position, (s*t no sub 40!), (s*t no T-shirt!), box empty! (It must be a mistake - no way!) I'm furious! Fastest k - 3.45 to 10KM. Three places shy. (What could have gone wrong?) (If only I'd... etc.) Thomas Porter tries to console me with congrats on a great race (no consolation) too pumped up and (too slow again!) too frustrated.

But, of course, it was a great race I realised as I came round myself and Thomas have been tit-for-tat all season. Thanks Thomas, I'd lost sight of the real reason for running St. Stephen's day, to see all those familiar friendly faces and so many new ones too. A huge thanks to Athenry AC, yet again, for yet another very memorable occasion. Congrats to all Craughwell AC's entrants and especially to all the new runners from our Fit4Life. Brilliant to see so many take on such a huge challenge so soon, each with as much emphasis on their goal as me on mine.

I can only imagine how it would have felt to have achieved the sub-40 today as two of my local rivals did, super efforts from Anne Carter & Mark Breen of Athenry AC. I'm delighted for you both and hope to join you in the sub-40 club in the near future. Any chance of a loan of the Green T, Mark?

2007 Fields of Athenry

Photo Gallery



The First Fields of Athenry 10KM Road Race - Some Personal Memories

Martin Keane

On the morning of 26th December 2002, recovering from the previous day's indulgences of food and whatever else was going, I got a telephone call from Dermot McNamara, who was doing his usual "Round Up All The Usual Suspects" for the then little-known inaugural Fields of Athenry 10KM Road Race. He made a request for anybody who would run, walk or even do some stewarding. As everyone knows, Dermot doesn't take no for an answer so my lame excuses fell on deaf ears.

At that early hour on St. Stephen's morning, everyone in our house was still under the blankets and weren't too pleased with me when I started shouting for volunteers to go to the race. After some cajoling our own Siobhán and my brother-in-law Martin McDonagh, or Vin as he is better known, agreed to come along.

Headford native, Vin, has lived in Dublin for most of his life but every year he spends Christmas with us in Athenry. Vin was no mean runner in his day, having completed 17 Dublin City Marathons. In the time that Carraroe held their 10KM/half marathon after Christmas, the two of us would go back there, run the race, enjoy the post-race festivities in the local hotel and return home to complete our own post-Christmas celebrations.

Anyhow, to get back to the Athenry race, when we got to St. Mary's GAA grounds, Dermot was at the gate directing operations. As he was short of stewards, Vin agreed to man the Castle Ellen junction on the Tuam Road. When relieved of his duties some hours later, we all met up again back at race HQ and Vin assured us that, if ever, Athenry AC had another race, he would run it instead, as he had barely avoided getting hypothermia standing on the road 'til the last competitor had passed.



The three of us have done the race every year since, though only Siobhán and myself appear on James Landon's list of Stalwarts. Vin has to settle for being an 'Almost' Stalwart.

That first Fields of Athenry Road Race had a meagre 69 competitors but nowadays the race is nearly as well known as the song with the same name. Nearly 9 times as many finished the race in 2007, for example!

Dermot McNamara will be glad not to have to ring up the usual suspects on 26th December 2008 but knowing him he'll still be directing operations at the Presentation Secondary on race morning.

Best wishes to everyone in today's race and good & safe running!

Athenry AC at this Year's Dublin City Marathon

Athenry AC had 27 finishers in this year's DCM - how many clubs had more, I wonder? Pride of place must go to the women's team who won the silver medal in the senior women's team event of the National Marathon. Congratulations to Elaine Walsh, Bernie Carter and Jane-Ann Healy. Valeria Glavin and Maria Hehir provided excellent back-up to them but sincere commiserations must also go to Ann Carter who ran every step of the way with Elaine Walsh and three-hour-pace-maker-supreme Mick Rice, until just outside UCD at Belfield and 21.5 miles before succumbing to knee/ITB problems. As

Elaine said in her outstanding report,: watch out for Ann in 2009. The senior men's team were 8th in their event.

Peadar Nugent secured silver in the men's V7 event and also kept alive his ever-present DCM status. See his 'bon mots' elsewhere here. Lezan Kimutai, a very good friend of the club, wore an Athenry AC singlet when coming 7th overall in 2:17:50.



Name	10KM Split	Half Split	30KM Split	Actual Time	Chip Time	Position
Brian O'Connor	0:37:31	1:19:40	1:55:14	2:47:14	2:47:17	78
Brian Bruton	0:40:33	1:24:00	1:59:05	2:48:39	2:48:39	86
Robert Staunton	0:40:17	1:25:25	2:01:20	2:52:25	2:52:28	120
Elaine Walsh	0:42:48	1:30:28	2:08:09	2:59:29	2:59:31	218
Mick Rice	0:42:48	1:30:28	2:08:09	2:59:34	2:59:35	221
Owen Curran	0:44:28	1:32:34	2:10:13	3:02:41	3:03:00	291
Paul Kilkelly	0:47:36	1:34:48	2:13:12	3:06:17	3:07:25	377
Mark Breen	0:45:06	1:31:59	2:09:37	3:06:49	3:07:50	389
Lawrence Kelly	0:42:48	1:30:29	2:09:03	3:12:26	3:12:48	527
Bernie Carter	0:42:49	1:31:24	2:12:20	3:14:14	3:14:17	579
Conor Dolan	0:46:01	1:36:50	2:17:47	3:14:16	3:14:56	594
Daniel Kavanagh	0:43:45	1:34:42	2:16:13	3:16:01	3:16:05	633
Jane-Ann Healy	0:43:31	1:35:08	2:17:14	3:16:57	3:16:59	664
John Donnellan	0:47:36	1:34:48	2:13:46	3:16:46	3:17:54	693
Frank Burke	0:48:38	1:41:29	2:23:29	3:20:40	3:20:59	803
Gary Doherty	0:47:28	1:41:15	2:22:40	3:23:05	3:23:17	895
Valeria Glavin	0:47:32	1:40:06	2:23:35	3:23:34	3:23:37	912
Ray O'Connor	0:48:07	1:41:11	2:23:55	3:26:15	3:26:15	1058
Michael Rooney	0:49:24	1:41:19	2:23:40	3:26:42	3:27:03	1098
James Landon	0:54:11	1:52:23	2:39:04	3:54:23	3:55:52	3222
Maria Hehir	0:56:07	1:55:42	2:46:34	3:58:11	4:00:17	3628
Finbarr Connolly	0:56:35	1:58:24	2:48:55	4:04:12	4:05:41	4032
Peter Strange	0:57:19	1:59:30	2:49:13	4:08:11	4:09:45	4305
Peadar Nugent	0:56:50	2:01:45	2:59:37	4:34:36	4:35:21	5976
Martin Keane	1:06:44	2:15:15	3:16:59	4:48:19	4:52:29	6875

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 Ni Mhuircheartaigh	38:52	617	50	253	457

2008 Stalwarts

The following 11 people hold the distinction of competing in all six "Fields of Athenry" 10KM races to date. We wish them the best of luck on their seventh outing this year.

Name	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Bernie Kelly	45:48	49:31	52:05	44:20	46:08	47:46
Danny Carr	36:15	38:11	36:00	36:41	38:06	38:06
Darragh O'Brien	38:16	40:53	39:59	37:13	35:42	35:33
Kevin O'Dea	48:27	50:16	51:25	46:44	53:49	53:35
Martin Keane	51:20	50:02	54:48	51:17	50:44	52:27
Mary Mullins	1:05:50	1:00:37	1:06:27	1:07:22	1:11:31	1:05:23
Patrick Kelly	49:16	51:48	52:15	50:20	50:56	49:52
Roger Rushe	45:07	44:29	46:15	44:33	45:24	45:52
Siobhan Keane	1:37:10	1:34:38	1:35:20	1:30:00	1:31:00	FNSED
Tomás MacLochlainn	49:57	56:35	50:10	52:23	56:58	FNSED
Tommy Joe Whyte	36:35	36:16	36:29	38:40	36:58	37:15

2007 Prize Winners

Category	Pos	Name
Senior Women	1st	Orla Ni Mhuircheartaigh
	2nd	Ann Carter
	3rd	Cathrine Conway
	4th	Tara Whyte
	5th	Deirdre O'Mahony
Junior Women	1st	Ciarra Gallagher
Women's V35	1st	Miriam Wall
Women's V40	1st	Liz Keane
Women's V45	1st	Carmel Brannigan
Women's V50	1st	Andrea Ridge
Women's V55	1st	Helena Fahy
Women's V60	1st	Audrey Gibson
Local Athenry Woman	1st	Claire Morrissey

Category	Pos	Name
Senior Men	1st	Gary Thornton
	2nd	Emmet Dunleavy
	3rd	Paul McNamara
	4th	Colin Merritt
	5th	John Byrne
Junior Men	1st	Keith Fallon
Men's V40	1st	Ian Egan
Men's V45	1st	Tommy Joe Whyte
Men's V50	1st	James Kenny
Men's V55	1st	Patrick Burkitt
Men's V60	1st	Tom Hunt
Men's V65	1st	Brian Geraghty
Men's V70	1st	Michael Kelly
Local Athenry Man	1st	Mark Davis
Women's Team	1st	GCH
Men's Team	1st	GCH
Triathlete	1st	Tommy O'Dowd
Wheelchair	1st	Jerry Forde

20 Questions

Lindie Naughton, author of "Irish Olympians - Faster, Higher, Stronger" - which is in the long list for this year's William Hill Irish Sports Book of the Year Award - answers our 20 Running Questions.



1. What shoes do you train in?

Adistar Cushion/Saloman trail shoes.

2. How many miles did you run last week?

15.

3. What's your favourite racing distance?

Light green on orienteering courses!

4. Where's your favourite place to train?

The Dublin Mountains when I can; Belfield trail locally.

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

Wicklow Way Relay.

6. What annoys you most at races?

Rip-off entry fees and over-commercialisation.

7. What race, that you haven't yet run, would you most like to take part in?

The annual Venice Street Orienteering event.

8. What was your best-ever running performance?

A hill race up Maulin when I was 7th to the top and ended up 2nd woman.

9. What was your worst-ever running performance?

A hill race in deepest Wicklow when I ended up in the back yard of the Glenmalur Lodge.

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

A dead horse.

11. Favourite piece of running gear?

Currently my Aldi socks and tights.

12. Who would you most enjoy beating in a sprint for the line?

Anyone wearing an iPod - but they wouldn't hear me anyway!

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

When in doubt, jog (Gerry Farnan - Eamonn Coghlan's late coach)

14. In ten years time will you still be running?

Hope so; have 36 years behind me already.

15. If for some reason you were told you could never run again, how do you think you'd react?

I'd continue coaching, play my guitar, spend time in my garden, write a book or three....

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

Advice: hold out your hand to any dog coming at you so they can have a sniff. It works.

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

Not a prob when you run in remote areas.

18. Favourite post-race food?

A cup of tea.

19. Most embarrassing ever running-related moment?

I'm a journalist - I don't embarrass!

20. The greatest Irish Athlete of all time is/was?

Bob Tisdall - a true gentleman. Also Mary Purcell, a trail blazer who inspired my generation of women. Finally, mountain runner John Lenihan.

Leipzig 100KM

Mick Rice

Mick Rice ran two 100KM road races this year, the first was in Leipzig in August - the same evening as the Claregalway 10KM. He wrote a superb report on the race, which is located on the Athenry AC web site at the following URL:

<http://www.athenryac.com/boiling-frogs-slowly-leipzig-100km-report>

What Mick omitted (out of modesty, of course!) to include in the report itself was his KM splits. Remember that 100KM is 62 miles in layman's speak. They are exclusively included below.

You'll have to read the report to figure out what happened to him during the 15th kilometre.

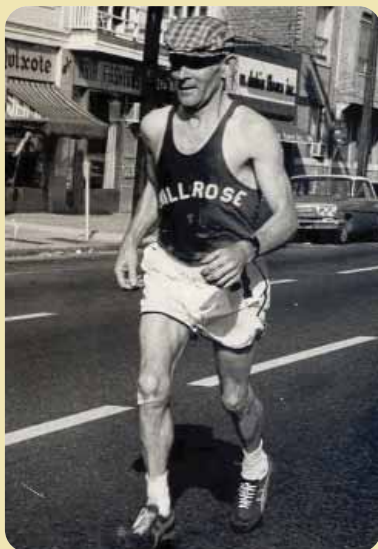


KM	Lap 1	Lap 2	Lap 3	Lap 4	Lap 5	Lap 6	Lap 7	Lap 8	Lap 9	Lap 10
1	5:05	4:44	4:36	4:40	4:37	4:41	4:39	4:41	4:39	4:38
2	4:59	4:42	4:46	4:38	4:44	4:46	4:44	4:38	4:45	4:47
3	4:45	4:42	4:36	4:44	4:27	4:31	4:29	4:38	4:33	4:35
4	4:59	4:45	4:45	4:46	4:42	4:44	4:43	4:43	4:48	4:55
5	4:46	6:13	4:33	4:34	4:34	4:35	4:39	4:37	4:45	4:48
6	4:46	4:34	4:38	4:55	4:35	4:37	5:01	4:39	4:42	4:42
7	4:44	4:39	4:39	4:32	4:35	4:41	4:39	4:40	4:44	4:48
8	4:57	4:49	4:48	4:43	4:41	4:47	4:47	4:45	4:51	5:00
9	4:34	4:31	4:33	4:31	4:30	4:34	4:33	4:32	4:37	4:41
10	4:45	4:44	4:38	4:41	4:40	4:43	4:44	4:41	4:44	4:31
Total	48:20	48:23	46:32	46:44	46:05	46:39	46:58	46:34	47:08	47:25

Marathon 3:20:03 1st 50KM 3:56:04 2nd 50KM 3:54:44 100KM 7:50:48



The glasses are probably a give-away! John O'Connor (Craigwell) from a sports meeting held in the Sportsgrounds on College Road at some stage in the mid-to late-70s.



Jim McDonagh, otherwise known as Shuffling Mac, died this year. A pioneer of Ultra-running, he was born and raised in Larchill, outside Loughrea. He won a number of early marathons and Ultra events in North America in the 1960s and early-1970s. Jim also represented the US in the Marathon at the Pan-American Games in 1968. Jim and his wife retired back to East Galway in the early-1980s.

May he rest in peace!

Fields of Athenry

Results 2007

1	30.02	Gary Thornton	88	42.36	Enda Collins	175	47.22	Patrick Forde	262	50.15	Aidan Hanley
2	31.23	Emmet Dunleavy	89	42.41	Colin Joyce	176	47.23	Peter O'Halloran	263	50.16	Peter Lyons
3	31.55	Paul McLamara	90	42.47	Tom Elwood	177	47.23	Cathal Cunningham	264	50.18	Valerie Fogarty
4	33.07	Colin Merritt	91	42.54	Barry Beirne	178	47.25	Brian Keenan	265	50.19	Andrew Parkinson
5	33.08	John Byrne	92	43.02	Kevin Duffy	179	47.27	John Kilraire	266	50.23	Eve Daly
6	33.41	Declan Fahey	93	43.06	Brian Heneghan	180	47.28	Kevin Lambie	267	50.24	Marie Reilly
7	34.29	T.J. McHugh	94	43.12	Niall Healy	181	47.28	Michael Burke	268	50.24	Paul Dugley
8	34.38	Ruaidhrí Geraghty	95	43.17	Philip Darcy	182	47.29	Patrick Scully	269	50.25	Mary Duffy
9	34.43	Jason Broderick	96	43.22	Enda Loughrane	183	47.30	Emmett O'Looney	270	50.26	Declan O'Halloran
10	35.12	Timmie Glavey	97	43.25	Philip Reilly	184	47.31	Carnel Brannigan	271	50.27	Jerry Forde
11	35.24	Ian Egan	98	43.26	Justin Niland	185	47.33	Barry Smyth	272	50.27	David Tierney
12	35.26	Mark Davis	99	43.26	Arnell McGowan	186	47.34	Fraser Gurney	273	50.28	Joehleen Archard
13	35.28	Michael O'Connell	100	43.29	Darren Murphy	187	47.33	Myles Meehan	274	50.31	Daniel Jones
14	35.33	Darragh O'Brien	101	43.31	Cyril Donnellan	188	47.37	Peter Lowmye	275	50.34	Frank Kitt
15	35.44	Sean Dowling	102	43.33	Paul Flannery	189	47.38	Sean Duffy	276	50.35	Anne Jordan
16	35.52	Conor Moloney	103	43.41	David Forde	190	47.39	Josephine Gardiner	277	50.39	Brian Carmody
17	36.02	Philip Glynn	104	43.47	Jarrah Fitzgerald	191	47.39	Finbar Connolly	278	50.39	Beibhinn Joyce
18	36.24	Joe Dawson	105	43.53	P. Concannon	192	47.46	Michael Quinn	279	50.41	Graham Surman
19	36.41	Johnny Lane	106	43.55	Seamus McGowan	193	47.46	Bernie Kelly	280	50.46	Gerald McManamon
20	36.48	Brian Bruton	107	43.57	Mark McKeigue	194	47.47	James Bernard Elwood	281	50.47	Sean O'Connell
21	36.50	James Kenny	108	43.59	Peter Walsh	195	47.51	Frank Healy	282	50.48	Mary Concannon
22	37.13	Tommy O'Dowd	109	44.03	Keith Heaney	196	47.53	Keith Connaghtion	283	50.49	Shane Fahy
23	37.15	Tommy Joe Whyte	110	44.03	Sean Healy	197	47.59	Dervel Donaney	284	50.54	Gerry Gonnar
24	37.35	Donal O'Rourke	111	44.08	John King	198	47.59	Derek Farrell	285	50.56	Maura Egan
25	37.43	Ronald Rayner	112	44.09	Michael Broderick	199	47.59	James Kereley	286	50.59	John Rafferty
26	37.57	David Mullins	113	44.09	Niall Callanan	200	48.00	Conor O'Grady	287	51.09	Liam Moloney
27	38.06	Danny Carr	114	44.11	Jim Maguire	201	48.02	Vincent Costello	288	51.13	Barry O'Malley
28	38.07	Fergus McDuff	115	44.13	Deirdre O'Mahony	202	48.08	Cathal Burke	289	51.21	Roisin Farragher
29	38.29	Mark Rafferty	116	44.13	Tim Folan	203	48.14	Tom O'Connor	290	51.26	Annette Crehan
30	38.32	Michael Cussen	117	44.18	David Ryan	204	48.16	Martin Kenirons	291	51.26	Stephen Hutchinson
31	38.33	Keith Whyte	118	44.22	Adrian Fitzmaurice	205	48.16	Tommy Morrissey	292	51.26	Mark Wilson
32	38.39	Conor Quinn	119	44.24	Clairé Morrissey	206	48.21	Gerry Killeen	293	51.28	Andrew Smit
33	38.45	Martin Greshall	120	44.32	T.J. Beatty	207	48.30	Eileen Sweeney	294	51.30	Eugene Heale
34	38.49	Brian Duffy	121	44.38	Ronan O'Cuailain	208	48.30	Finbar Flaherty	295	51.39	Edward Egan
35	38.50	Hubie Conway	122	44.38	Dave Kelly	209	48.32	Conor Naughton	296	51.39	Caltriona Broderick
36	38.50	Patrick Sherry	123	44.50	Eoin O'Connor	210	48.39	Darragh Geraghty	297	51.40	Mary O'Looney
37	38.52	Orla MIMHurchearthaigh	124	44.56	Jason Loughrey	211	48.54	Maura Falsely	298	51.40	Angela Court
38	38.53	Martin O'Donnell	125	44.59	Kevin Conlon	212	48.55	Steve Winston	299	51.41	Frank Fox
39	39.03	David Kearins	126	45.01	Patrick Burkitt	213	48.59	Shane Martin	300	51.41	Aonghus McGuinness
40	39.11	Noel Burke	127	45.04	Fran Keenan	214	49.00	Katherine Kissane	301	51.44	Michael Lee
41	39.20	Kevin Darcy	128	45.08	Cathal McDonagh	215	49.01	John Burke	302	51.46	Unknown
42	39.27	Mark Breen	129	45.11	Eimear Butler	216	49.02	Gerry Killeen	303	51.47	David Kearney
43	39.36	Michael Solon	130	45.11	Cyril Costello	217	49.03	Will Munday	304	51.50	Jim Donnelly
44	39.37	David Reilly	131	45.17	David Donohue	218	49.04	Owen Murphy	305	51.52	Paul Forde
45	39.39	Ann Carter	132	45.20	Maurice Headd	219	49.05	Peadar Nugent	306	51.54	Dervilla D'Arcy
46	39.40	Stephen Donnelly	133	45.36	Brian Kelly	220	49.05	Michael McCarthy	307	51.54	David Kilcommins
47	39.47	Damian Reilly	134	45.43	Cáitreach Mac Stiofáin	221	49.06	Niall McKenna	308	51.57	Diarmuid O'Uill
48	39.51	David Hume	135	45.43	Gabriel Gardiner	222	49.07	Robert Donnellan	309	52.02	Iarlaigh O'Leary
49	39.56	Tom Hunt	136	45.46	Michael Evans	223	49.08	Aislín Connolly	310	52.05	Gillian Diviney
50	39.59	Matt Kennedy	137	45.48	Michael Crean	224	49.09	Caltriona NicCaba	311	52.07	Derek Diviney
51	40.11	Gerry Kenny	138	45.48	Pat Keady	225	49.11	*** man blue top ***	312	52.07	Michael Quinn
52	40.17	Colman Greene	139	45.52	Roger Rushe	226	49.15	*** man #9 top ***	313	52.08	Eileen Molloy
53	40.20	Tony Nevin	140	45.55	Brendan Cusack	227	49.16	Aiden Burke	314	52.10	Gerry Hurley
54	40.22	Ciaran Burke	141	45.55	Cathal McHugh	228	49.17	Dympna Curran	315	52.17	Audrey Mc Mahon
55	40.26	Thomas Porter	142	45.56	Kevin O'Loughlin	229	49.19	James Byrne	316	52.18	Niall McCann
56	40.32	Alan Archard	143	45.59	Dara Burke	230	49.20	Michael O'Malley	317	52.19	Ruaidhrí Murray
57	40.35	Patrick Conn	144	45.59	Caoimhe Burke	231	49.20	Brian Lyons	318	52.22	Muiréann Lohan
58	40.41	Paul Curran	145	46.01	Donal Daulty	232	49.21	Owen Finn	319	52.22	Timothy Heaverty
59	40.42	Dermot Moore	146	46.02	Sean Noone	233	49.21	Seamus Howard	320	52.25	James McCalla
60	40.47	Pat O'Dwyer	147	46.04	Patrick O'Loan	234	49.22	Michael Kenna	321	52.27	Martin Keane
61	40.51	Cathrine Conway	148	46.05	Martin Geary	235	49.23	Mark Rooney	322	52.36	Niall Martin
62	40.53	Daniel Kavanagh	149	46.18	Declan Furey	236	49.23	Carthy Naylor	323	52.37	Morgan McHugh
63	41.03	Jim Daly	150	46.19	Seamus Coyne	237	49.24	Unknown	324	52.39	Sean Doherty
64	41.07	Gabriel Brennan	151	46.29	Miriam Wall	238	49.29	Fergal O'Neill	325	52.41	Frank Shovin
65	41.16	Keith Fallon	152	46.33	Enda Devitt	239	49.32	Brian Gardiner	326	52.42	Conor Monaghan
66	41.18	John Hardiman	153	46.36	Liz Keane	240	49.33	Michelle Rowley	327	52.46	Shirley Potter
67	41.29	Brian Murphy	154	46.38	Kenneth Cronin	241	49.37	Gerard Keane	328	52.46	Diana Hogan-Murphy
68	41.31	Alan Fitzgerald	155	46.39	John F Fahy	242	49.40	Maire Treasa Beatty	329	52.47	Johnny Nevin
69	41.35	Tara Whyte	156	46.40	Blaithin Liston	243	49.42	Donal Connolly	330	52.48	Denise de Paor
70	41.41	Larry Kelly	157	46.42	John O'Shaughnessy	244	49.43	John Royston	331	52.48	Arlene McGuinness
71	41.44	Brian Geraghty	158	46.43	Bernard Keane	245	49.45	Sean Walsh	332	52.49	Bairbre Bergin
72	41.46	James Lally	159	46.44	Kevin Connacnought	246	49.46	Declan Murphy	333	52.50	Seamus Sweeney
73	41.49	Michael O'Malley	160	46.48	Martin Sexton	247	49.46	Declan Brennan	334	52.52	Bob Reilly
74	41.52	Brendan Moraght	161	46.53	James O'Dea	248	49.47	James O'Dea	335	52.53	Frank McDonagh
75	41.52	Peter Payton	162	46.55	Claire Halliday	249	49.48	Rachel Maloney	336	52.56	Olivia Walsh
76	41.56	Conor Flanagan	163	46.55	Derrick Mitchell	250	49.48	Ruth Kilcawley	337	53.04	Pat O'Donoghue
77	41.57	Noel Fitzgerald	164	46.56	Liam Fitzpatrick	251	49.52	Patrick Kelly	338	53.04	Aoife Nash
78	41.58	Val Murray	165	46.59	Kenneth Burke	252	49.57	Finian Fahey	339	53.06	Yvonne Crothy
79	42.05	Brian McManus	166	46.59	Ken Farragher	253	49.59	John Morgan	340	53.09	Paul Cheevers
80	42.05	Thomas Nally	167	47.05	Maurice Dempsey	254	50.01	Sintea Foran	341	53.10	Paul McGrath
81	42.12	Unknown	168	47.05	Eoin Ward	255	50.03	John Lynch	342	53.11	Jimmy O'Connor
82	42.17	Niall O'Connor	169	47.08	Coley Kelly	256	50.03	Niall Burke	343	53.12	Sean O'Connor
83	42.19	Keith Whyte	170	47.11	Aideen De Paor	257	50.05	Carol Dempsey	344	53.14	Karen Weir
84	42.24	David Thomas	171	47.11	Kwame Draper	258	50.06	Emmet O'Connor	345	53.16	Nicola Weir
85	42.26	Derek Vaughan	172	47.15	Adrian McKernan	259	50.06	David O'Reilly	346	53.18	David Lint
86	42.28	John Connolly	173	47.16	Liam Breathnach	260	50.07	Billy O'Mahony	347	53.19	Nicola Deacy
87	42.31	Dara McDonagh	174	47.20	Karen McMonagle	261	50.14	David Geraghty	348	53.20	Don Deacy

349	53:20	Aine Cudrye	417	56:18	Clodagh Grealy	485	1:02:43	Wayne Williams	553	FNSHD	Kathleen Hogan
350	53:22	Mary Walsh	418	56:18	Mary Kate Dilger	486	1:03:09	Niall Coleman	554	FNSHD	Laura Murphy
351	53:23	Caroline Burke	419	56:20	Paul Lally	487	1:03:09	Olive Coleman	555	FNSHD	Fidelma Healy Eames
352	53:23	Niall McGuire	420	56:20	Mary Lyng	488	1:03:10	Bernadette Grealish	556	FNSHD	Louise Harte
353	53:27	Gerard Reid	421	56:37	Linda Brennan	489	1:03:28	Michael Doc Doherty	557	FNSHD	Helena Fahy
354	53:27	Mick Power	422	56:37	Pat Reddy	490	1:03:44	Jácinta Conlon	558	FNSHD	Anthony Ryan
355	53:28	Peter O'Donoghue	423	56:38	Lisa Kelly	491	1:03:44	Michael Kelly	559	FNSHD	Mattie Duanne
356	53:29	Barry Moran	424	56:38	David Rohan	492	1:03:45	Mary Prendergast	560	FNSHD	Sally Cunningham
357	53:31	Allen Moran	425	56:38	Kathleen Waters	493	1:04:31	Joe McMonagle	561	FNSHD	Tom Gormally
358	53:34	Kevin O'Dea	426	56:38	Edel Tighe	494	1:04:45	Mike Kelly	562	FNSHD	Thomas MacLoughlin
359	53:36	Maewd Noone	427	56:56	Deirdre Fitzsimons	495	1:04:45	Bernie Quinn	563	FNSHD	Grainne O'Mahony
360	53:39	Sinead O'Connor	428	57:08	Paul Killealy	496	1:04:47	Anita Connolly	564	FNSHD	Patrick Whaley
361	53:42	Alan O'Callaghan	429	57:10	Orla Davis	497	1:04:52	Pauline Hardiman	565	FNSHD	Catherine Magner
362	53:44	Gerald McGough	430	57:10	John Walsh	498	1:05:15	Theresa Caulfield	566	FNSHD	Ashla Ward
363	53:48	Paul Murtagh	431	57:24	Geraldine Fahy	499	1:05:20	Caroline Deehan	567	FNSHD	Paul Feighery
364	53:49	Helén Connefrey	432	57:37	Alan Ledwith	500	1:05:20	Maria Cronnelly	568	FNSHD	Elisha Kilcormin
365	53:49	Gerard Lynch	433	57:43	Joanne Murphy	501	1:05:21	Caroline Cannon	569	FNSHD	Clare Pa
366	53:49	Eimear McNamara	434	57:57	Kristin Riall	502	1:05:22	Paul O'Jha	570	FNSHD	Petrina Gannon
367	53:52	William Cannon	435	57:57	Rochelle Howell	503	1:05:23	Mary Mullins	571	FNSHD	Bernie Lyons
368	53:55	Unknown	436	57:58	Oliver Niland	504	1:05:28	Julie Gallagher	572	FNSHD	Marie Lyons
369	53:55	Donal Walsh	437	58:01	Elaine Rowley	505	1:05:30	Maire Tarpey	573	FNSHD	John Kelly
370	53:57	Joe O'Neill	438	58:03	Eric Reed	506	1:05:44	Tracy Fahy	574	FNSHD	Noreen Doherty
371	53:59	Sean Ryan	439	58:10	Nial Eames	507	1:05:47	Orla Cunningham	575	FNSHD	Damien Healy
372	54:03	Alan Collieran	440	58:20	Tom Newell	508	1:05:47	Clodagh Cunningham	576	FNSHD	Sinead Brady
373	54:03	Niall Flynn	441	58:21	Dominique Berlie	509	1:05:53	Colette Delahunty	577	FNSHD	Julie Carr
374	54:04	Keith Duggan	442	58:25	Maria Keating	510	1:05:55	Hugh Dowling	578	FNSHD	Maria Mackey
375	54:04	Grainne Brennan	443	58:26	Ellis Foran	511	1:05:56	Sabrina Mullins	579	FNSHD	Coline O'Loan
376	54:04	Roslin Ní Mhuiricheartaigh	444	58:33	Thomas Mangan	512	1:06:04	Vibeke Soerensen	580	FNSHD	Neasa Carr
377	54:05	Anne-Marie Walsh	445	58:40	Stella McGrath	513	1:06:46	Sharon Allen	581	FNSHD	Aine Glynn
378	54:07	John Curragh	446	58:40	AnnlMaire Walsh	514	1:06:57	Liam McGrath	582	FNSHD	Caroline Glynn
379	54:08	Shane Donohue	447	58:41	Marcus Boland	515	1:06:58	Eamon Higgins	583	FNSHD	*** unknown ***
380	54:08	Kennil Rohan	448	58:44	Rob Thompson	516	1:07:00	Teresa McCalla	584	FNSHD	Breda Fox
381	54:10	Michael Kelly	449	58:47	Gerry Rohan	517	1:07:00	Frances Carr	585	FNSHD	Suzanne Diviney
382	54:11	Aisling Fahy	450	58:50	Mike Keane	518	1:07:28	Anna Reed	586	FNSHD	Maietta O'Dea
383	54:14	Kevin Cormican	451	58:51	Unknown	519	1:08:02	Marie Allen	587	FNSHD	Mairaed Cooley
384	54:27	Tony O'Callaghan	452	58:55	John Fahy	520	1:08:11	Maria Burke	588	FNSHD	Krista Olson
385	54:31	John Noone	453	59:05	Paul Keane	521	1:08:11	Deirdre McHugh	589	FNSHD	Yvonne Burke
386	54:38	Thomas Keys	454	59:27	Irene Hadd	522	1:08:11	Ailish Rohan	590	FNSHD	Maura Burke
387	54:40	Noel Gorman	455	59:34	Margaret Glavin	523	1:08:11	Anne M Ruane	591	FNSHD	Helen McLamara
388	54:42	Eamonn Reilly	456	59:46	Ailison Mulholland	524	1:08:11	Sean Hynes	592	FNSHD	Clodagh McHugh
389	54:44	Barbre NíMhaile	457	59:54	Fiona McCann	525	1:08:38	David Murray	593	FNSHD	Laura Deehan
390	54:49	Donal Mackey	458	1:00:03	Niamh Tierney	526	1:08:39	Padraig Farragher	594	FNSHD	Joanne O'Connor
391	54:50	Sean Broderick	459	1:00:02	Doris Beattie	527	1:08:42	Emily Forde	595	FNSHD	Anne Keane
392	54:53	Jean Mackey	460	1:00:10	Eleanor Walsh	528	1:09:44	Gerard Broderick	596	FNSHD	Teresa Brady
393	54:55	Paul Hardiman	461	1:00:18	Ellish Hogge	529	1:09:55	Aishling Walsh	597	FNSHD	Caroline McLoughlin
394	54:56	Brian Kelly	462	1:00:20	Grainne NíMhaile	530	1:10:04	Paul Mitchell	598	FNSHD	Carol Keane
395	55:00	Noel Fahy	463	1:00:22	Sile NíMhaile	531	1:10:24	Deirdre Noone	599	FNSHD	Pat Holland
396	55:01	Patrick Wall	464	1:00:26	Helen Garvey	532	1:12:11	Clochea Flavin	600	FNSHD	Orla Ferguson
397	55:03	Mary Coyne	465	1:00:28	Deirdre Hogge	533	1:12:23	Aidan Broderick	601	FNSHD	Violeta Wall
398	55:07	Maria Hehir	466	1:00:32	Helen Hillinan	534	1:13:45	Sinead Kilcormin	602	FNSHD	Siothán Cahill
399	55:07	Nicola Rooney	467	1:00:32	Anne Kelly	535	1:13:45	Sinead McLoughlin	603	FNSHD	Margaret Cannon
400	55:10	Orla Kilrane	468	1:00:45	Michael Kelly	536	1:14:43	Susan Gavenin	604	FNSHD	Clare Carr
401	55:12	Tara Connolly	469	1:00:59	Eimear Grealy	537	1:14:43	Masbith Cannon	605	FNSHD	Siothán Keane
402	55:12	Debbie Flynn	470	1:01:11	Conor Kilroy	538	1:15:04	Michael Glynn	606	FNSHD	Tressa Keane
403	55:15	Unknown	471	1:01:13	Niamh McMonagle	539	1:15:11	Helena Finn	607	FNSHD	Frank Mulvihill
404	55:26	Cormac Evans	472	1:01:14	Lydia Murray	540	1:15:14	Nora Murrey	608	FNSHD	Della O'Donnell
405	55:26	Aaron McCormack	473	1:01:20	Karen Guest	541	1:15:43	Grainne Costello	609	FNSHD	Naomh O'Dwyer
406	55:31	Conor Lennihan	474	1:01:20	Dymphna Scanlon	542	1:15:43	Fiona Harris	610	FNSHD	Eileen Keary Gallagher
407	55:32	Deirdre Keary	475	1:01:24	Sharon Rafferty	543	FNSHD	Rosemarie Atkinson	611	FNSHD	Claire Gallagher
408	55:33	Andrea Ridge	476	1:01:28	Martina Solon	544	FNSHD	Clara O'Grady	612	FNSHD	Angela Crimmins
409	55:43	Niamh Kingston	477	1:01:32	Fiona O'Brien	545	FNSHD	Helen Duffly	613	FNSHD	Mary Crimmins
410	55:43	Aoife Lane	478	1:01:43	Martin V'Donoghue	546	FNSHD	Lisa McCormack	614	FNSHD	Jayne Baker
411	55:45	Aisling Brennan	479	1:02:14	Catherine Burke	547	FNSHD	Mark Gibson	615	FNSHD	Catherine Gibson
412	55:46	Laura Kitt	480	1:02:15	Anne Finn	548	FNSHD	Mark Gibson	616	FNSHD	Audrey Gibson
413	55:49	Unknown	481	1:02:32	Rachael O'Brien	549	FNSHD	Emily Gibson	617	FNSHD	Liam Lowry
414	56:08	Ailish O'Reilly	482	1:02:34	Maria Lane	550	FNSHD	Philip Duffly			
415	56:14	Philip McManus	483	1:02:37	Aoife Doherty	551	FNSHD	Martin Hynes			
416	56:15	Tara Russell	484	1:02:43	Richard Evans	552	FNSHD	Rachel Vickers			

2008 Road Races

James Lunden

Sunday, 13 January - Tuam 8KM

Sunday, 27 January - Craughwell Fit4Life 5KM I

Sunday, 2 March - Athlery Fit4Life 5KM

Sunday, 6 April - Connemara Half/Full/Ultra

Sunday, 20 April - AAI National 10KM, Athlery

Saturday, 12 April - Aer Arann Aran Half

Sunday, 13 April - Maree 8KM

Tuesday, 29 April/6, 13, 20, 27 May/3 June -

Galway May 5KM Series of 6 races

Saturday, 17 May - Inisbofin Half

Saturday, 17 May - Christian Camps 10KM, Salthill

Saturday, 21 June - Annaghdown 10KM

Saturday, 12 July - Headford 8KM

Wednesday, 23 July - Boston Scientific 5KM, Maree

Saturday, 9 August - Streets of Galway 8KM

Saturday, 16 August - Claregalway 10KM

Sat'day, 13 Sept. - Bert Gillard Memorial 5KM, Tuam

Sunday, 14 September - Clifden 10KM

Sunday, 28 September - Loughrea 5M

Saturday, 4 October - Galway Bay 10M

Saturday, 15 November - Inis "Iron" Meán 10KM

Sunday, 16 November - Craughwell Fit4Life 5KM II

Friday, 26 December - Fields of Athlery 10KM

Proposed new races in 2009 include a 10KM race in Kiltonion (near Loughrea) in early March.

Stay tuned to www.athenryac.com for more information on it and all other events in the West of Ireland and beyond.

2008 National 10KM in Athenry

A Report of Sorts - James London



After a number of unsuccessful applications, Athenry AC secured the right to hold the 2008 National 10KM Road Race Championship back in late-2007. Firstly, we got over the 2007 Fields before beginning to concentrate our minds on the job at hand in late-April!

Thankfully, the organisational effort was a lot less for a National 10KM than it would be normally for a Fields 10KM. The club would not have to worry about entries, about the logistics of the finish line or about the results generation process, all of them stressful in their own right. All we in the club had to do on this occasion was to provide a properly-measured & safe course, which we did by slightly altering our usual 10KM course. This was done by taking the level crossing out of play as we couldn't guarantee its complete availability for the whole duration of the race. TJ Beatty did the necessary measurement job in early March, with Colm Moorehead as his helper, in early March. We had to provide an adequate HQ, with the Presentation Convent doing the honours as before. And the necessary catering afterwards, of course! We also provided a specially-commissioned race booklet for this very special occasion.

It was nearly 50 years since Athenry had last held a national athletic championship and we wanted to do it right. The day of the race was cloudy but dry. The race started

around the 9.5KM mark on the existing Fields course at the allotted time and then proceeded in under the new finish line at ADC House and back out the Tuam Road on the existing Fields course. Three hundred and fifty plus athletes lined up - almost double the average number of competitors for this national championship over the previous 8 years of its existence. The race itself worked like clockwork. The stewarding was obvious and proficient. The water stops were present but those helpers were probably not run off their feet due to the profile of runners present :). There were even some spectators on the roadside, who gave all of us ample encouragement. It might be the only time I'd ever get to really race my own course as I've never run in a Fields race to date - have always been in the backroom during that race helping out, as has Mick Rice. Peter Delmer was allowed to run the first Fields but not since!



The race finish was perfectly positioned. The road was fully cordoned off and finishers could mill around in freedom behind the wide finish line. That I was beaten to the line by a 67 year old man was no dishonour, especially when his name happened to be Brian Geraghty (GCH)! The elusive 40 minute barrier still eludes me but I did see 'heaven' for just two seconds: as I turned to come up the finishing straight I was able to spy 39:5X on the finish line clock. It wasn't enough, as I thought might be the case beforehand. I have been very close (40:09) before and know what I have to do to get under 40. Doing "it" is a different matter though!

It took me a while to recover my breath afterwards but it helped that my lady wife was there to welcome me. After some perfunctory photos, we all adjourned to the Presentation Convent HQ for a fuller debriefing. Again, I feel that we did the club proud with the refreshments offered to all there. A short while later, the presentations took place and the event was soon over. All that was left was the clean-up, which was quickly undertaken - many hands do make for light work. I didn't have to worry about producing a result, or the multitude of other tasks necessary to close off a race, on this occasion. Heaven, indeed.



10 Marathons

in 10 Days - Parting Words

Ray O'Connor



Looking back at the Brathay Challenge (9 May to May 2008), the one thing that really stands out was my ability to push myself beyond anything that I could imagine during training. The 262 miles was a challenge alright, but the training was bigger. Just how do you get yourself into shape to run a distance that seems to many beyond human natural ability, ten times over ten days? I hadn't a clue really.

In truth, I didn't start training for this until the first week of December following a year that saw me running 10 sub 4 hour marathons, two PB's including a sub 3.30 for the first time ever. Maybe I was leaving it a bit late, giving myself just five months to prepare, but my thinking was that it would be better not to get injured by doing too much. There were a few highlights along the way - a double marathon weekend in early March, and I suppose one cold, wet Sunday evening in Galway when I ran two 13 mile loops to complete the full distance in training. The mental torture I had to overcome as the loop started and finished a few hundred yards from my bed. It took extraordinary willpower not to pack it in after the first loop that evening and facing that dilemma really stood to me during the event itself. A strange highlight but one I'll never forget. A good few 80+ mile weeks and a lot of gym work is how I'd sum up this training programme.

My strategy for the week and a half ahead was to keep it slow for the first five days and see how I was. I knew I could do three marathons, thought I could do five, day six was scary, seven would be terrifying, day eight (if I got there) would be beyond imagination, day nine and ten should be easier as I'd nearly be finished. A course inspection on our arrival did nothing to calm the nerves. The Windermere marathon route is considered one of the toughest in Britain. I didn't know that!!!! But ready or not, the first day of the challenge pounced.

I took my time for the first three days, 4:50, 4:46, 4:38 with no real trouble at all. Keeping everything in check and not doing anything stupid was the main battle. There were a few giggles over the first few days but I found when I ran faster I had no pain whatsoever so the pace in Day 4 was a bit quicker finishing in 4:20 and still very comfortable. Day 5 was the last confident day. Starting out that morning I knew I was OK, the legs were OK, the head was OK, the course was getting familiar and the hills were actually getting to be OK. Coasted home in 4:20 again.

And then finally into the unknown. Halfway there, 131 miles done and the best thing to do at that stage was not to let anything get to me, stay as relaxed as possible and stay out of trouble. I was starting to hurt but still kept everything

intact just to make it to the next day, always thinking, just one day more. Finished the day easy enough in 4:29. And then all of a sudden there it loomed: Day 7.

To describe what was going on in my head that morning would fill a book but all I'll say is that a different atmosphere enveloped me that morning. The group I was running with had formed a really strong bond and despite lots of laughter at the start I was getting more focused day by day. Not letting things get to me, trying to block out any negativity, pushing away any signs of pain, convincing myself that I wasn't tired. It was working. I always describe day 7 as being my nemesis. { Dictionary: Nemesis: the inescapable agent of someone's downfall } That's how it looked to me. If I got through this, I'll get through anything. I have never been more focused than I was during those 26 miles and unbelievably I managed a PB of 3:26.

I'll never forget Mick Rice's text back after I sent him the good news ... 'gobshite'. Summed it up really, he assumed I threatened my ability to finish the event by doing something stupid, by going out too fast. But looking back, I think the elation that Day 7 gave me spurred me on and gave me an added desire to finish this one out. The extra adrenaline of that effort pushed me to yet another sub 3:30 on Day 8. And then, predictably, Day 9 was run while gorging on pain killers, hobbling all over the road with excruciating pain in my left ankle. Despite physio treatment every day, injuries were taking their toll on the entire group as the bandages started to pile high. That painful marathon took 4:34 to finish but by then the finish line was in sight.

All I had to do was finish a marathon and I'd be done. Day 10 was emotional on lots of levels. But there was a job to be done. Hobble to the start for one. Hobble to half way for two. And then the world opened its arms and wrapped me in the warmest feeling of exhilaration I have ever felt in my life.

The main event of the week was the 1,000 participant Windermere Marathon which started an hour after us. At the half way point the leader of the main race passed me quickly followed by the second placed guy. Instead of focusing every nanosecond on the leader ahead of him he actually put his thumb up and said 'Fair play to you, mate.' I smiled. Then third place did the same and it lifted me. Then

fourth, then fifth. I couldn't believe it. While focusing on a high place in their race, the elite field were actually acknowledging my effort. And that was the turning point. My pain instantly lifted and I picked up the pace. Ran up the hills, ran down, coasted along, ran with 7 min milers, ran with the leading women, ran some of them to a walk such was the pace. It was amazing. I couldn't explain it. Before I knew I was shooting down the finish line screaming - I'm doing it!!!! And then it was over. 4:19 (sub two hour second half).

I laughed, cried, drank beer, drank champagne, cheered, celebrated, danced, laughed and cried again.

10 marathons in 10 days with some of the best people I have ever met.

Bridget Anne had made the trip to see me finish and it made it all the more exciting. Thanks BA and everyone who supported this effort, for the encouragement, emails and texts, sponsorship and for being there for me through this epic journey.

Editor's Note:

I got Ray to text me one word for each of the 10 days - his time for the day is in brackets:

1. Brutal (4:20)
2. Steady (4:46)
3. Easier (4:38)
4. Weeeeeeeee (4:20)
5. Ouch (4:20)
6. Wheresmyglycogengone (4:29)
7. Solid (3:26:47)
8. Crumbling (3:27:47)
9. Bleeping bleep (4:34)
10. [No word received - I wonder why?] (4:19)

The Real Enemy Is Time Tom Hunt



They say time marches on. Not jogs, skips, or power-walks. Just the relentless tick-tock across the parade ground of life. When we measure business performance it is generally against an agreed timescale. Terms and conditions apply. They apply too to the races we run. Distance, terrain, elevation, laps, but time is the parameter. Athletics has the advantage of being completely measurable.

Athenry AC was formed just over six years ago. What a difference they have made to the running scene in the West. A young club among many, but already thriving and expanding, forward looking, innovating - probably the best club website in the country among the eighty odd listed. We often look to the traditional established clubs for inspiration and look to the best of these as a benchmark of our own performance. For example, Raheny Shamrock have just celebrated their Golden Jubilee and are rightly regarded as one of the top clubs in the country. They have had three Olympians so far. Just look at their achievements recently in the National Marathon championships. They have a wonderful inspiring coach in Dick Hooper. I remember his words at a presentation in Balla a few years ago. Asked what makes a champion, he said simply 'talent and a lot of hard work'. Athenry AC (and Ireland) are rightly proud of their Olympian Paul Hession. He certainly meets Dick Hooper's criteria. Within our own clubs we all have friends, motivators and mentors, but we have to go out there as individuals and put in the work. No one can do it for you.

Athenry AC will be reflecting on their year in these long dark December evenings and preparing for 2009. I mention their six years of existence as a tenuous link with my own entry to the V6 category in the past year.

What have I learned over the past year? In running terms, I recognise now that I put pressure on myself to continue to run at the same pace or better. Turning sixty was only one small step over the threshold into a new decade, but it got my wires a bit crossed. This was certainly irrational. The undisputed evidence says there is a steady decline each year. My first 10KM as a V6 was the 2007 FoA 10KM. I just managed to dip under 40 mins. I ran the usual races in the beginning of 2008: Tuam, Masters Indoors, Raheny 5,

Masters XC etc. and then three tough 10KM's in March, all under 40 mins, and a half marathon in Omagh.

Oh, my. That's when the trouble started. The following day I broke down in the middle of a four mile run. It was the beginning of four frustrating months. Friends told me it had happened for a reason. And then they walked away without telling me why. Physios, ice, rest, stretching, stupidly trying to run through the pain, walking, googling the word 'popliteus'. Trying out 'magic' machines ... all followed. The worst pain was going to watch races - the National 10KM at Athenry, the Mayo AC Road League. Time, of course, was the healer, and regular applications of ice pack, and rest. Leg up on a chair playing scrabble on PC. And time to think. 'Running is done in the mind' said retired University of Arkansas coach, John McDonnell - a Mayo man - when he spoke recently on "Succeeding In Your Chosen Field", organised by the Mayo Sports Partnership. He has coached 23 Olympians, including gold, silver and bronze medallists

I got back to some low key training in late July, did a few short races on track at the Outdoor Masters, and was relieved to run a decent Half Marathon in the National Championships in September without major problems re-appearing. Then the figure six came up again. Could I possibly miss out on my sixth consecutive Dublin. Would I even get to the start line? I did all the same things I did in previous marathon preparation. A few 20 mile long runs zig-zagging up hill to Knock Airport and back down. Knock Shrine might have been a better place for those knees. However, the dodgy 'boggy' kneecap that physios went on about continued to worry me.

Having done the preparation and the Gerry Farnan XC 8k eight days before Dublin, I was still a bundle of nerves on the start line on Oct 27. Then my Garmin watch (fully charged the night before) failed to start - battery low?! I switched it off, and switched myself into positive mode - it was the best of starts. Further back at the start than usual, I decided the four time checks - 10KM, half way, 30k and that other one when they stopped you running - would be my pace guide. During the first five, pain in my kneecap kept knocking my head into negativity mode and I was thinking of pulling out in the Phoenix Park if it got worse.

Then I caught up with runners I expected to be behind me, some of the 18 Mayo, some of the 27 Athenry, the familiar green of Tommy Joe (Whyte), and Regina (Casey) in the red and white of GCH. The monitor said 45.59 at 10KM. My head hiccuped but my knee felt better. Out the Chapelizod gate 'chatting' with West Limerick's Seamus Cawley. 1.34.26 at half, in a good steady groove, 2.14.10 at 30KM. Then that awful grind over the last three miles. And finally along the exhilarating 'Tour de France' funnel of faces to see the clock ticking down to 3.11.07 (3.10.10 chip) as I finished in the usual lather of adrenaline and fatigue. Harry Gorman saying "Well done Mayo, keep moving!" John Byrne and Paul Moran there to meet and greet. What a joy!

I am so grateful to all those who ran with me to help me achieve my goal, and to all those who supported me when I could not run during the year. This is the real wonderful world of running. Friends and foes ... the real enemy is

time. Veteran rivalry is as strong as ever. Our athletic peers make us push a bit harder than usual. As George Sheehan says "Of course we are not really competing against each other - we are witnesses to each others' achievements - but dammit, I hate to get beaten by a witness in my own age group!"

The learning will continue race by race, run after run. In McDonnell, Hooper and Hession, we have three generations of wisdom and inspiration to help us along the road.

All the best to Athenry AC and to the participants in FoA 2008.

Best wishes to everyone for an injury free and enjoyable running year in 2009. Whatever happens, have a good time!

Twenty Nine and Almost Out - Almost a Lifetime

Running the Dublin City Marathon

Peadar Nugent

It would be impossible to detail minutely my participation in all 29 Dublin City Marathons since the inaugural one in 1980 in a single write-up of this length and I do not intend to bore the reader with a list of my times for each one but rather to set out briefly some of the highlights and indeed some lowlights also of those endeavours.

All adventures have their beginnings and my involvement with the Dublin Marathon began at its birth. This now world-famous marathon was the brainchild of Louis Hogan of RTE Radio Two - now RTE 2FM. Louis brought the idea, with an offer of sponsorship, to the late Noel Carroll of the BHAA. The idea was taken on board by the BHAA, then less than one year in existence, and they agreed at a meeting held on 30 November 1979 to take care of the

race's organisation. Nearly a year of constant publicity followed, culminating in the first running of the event on the following October Bank Holiday Monday, 27 October 1980, at a start time of midday in St Stephen's Green. The Souvenir programme, priced at 30p (equivalent to 38c in today's money), lists just over 2,000 entries and the final published results show that 1,420, of whom just 41 were females, completed the course.

My involvement with athletics at senior level was, until the late 1970s, almost exclusively in the area of sprinting and jumping. By then the speed necessary for success in those disciplines - at which I had been quite successful at both local and national level under the NACA! umbrella - was deserting me and, to maintain contact with the sport, I had



taken to doing a 4/5 mile run a few times a week with Maurice McMorrow who was a work colleague of mine and who I understood was 6 years older than me. Recent records, however, indicate that he is now only 4 years older. Maurice had some previous experience of distance running up to about 15 miles and the euphoria generated by the forthcoming marathon eventually got to both of us towards the end of August 1980 when we decided to enter and run together. Training for us consisted of successive runs of 5, 8, 12 and 15 miles on alternate days - a weekly average of 35 miles for about 2 months - at 7 minute pace. Our strategy for marathon day was to go at 8 minute pace and aim for a 3:30 hour finish. Unbelievably, we missed our target by less than 2 minutes. This was the first of many Dublin marathon highlights for me. The seed had been sown.

Fast forward to 1992 when I achieved my one and only sub 3 hour marathon. I never exceeded 3:30 for any of my annual efforts in Dublin during the intervening years but missed that target by 4 minutes in my only other marathon during that time - New York in 1990, just 6 days after a satisfactory run in Dublin. While New York was a big disappointment for me, having hoped for a good time there, finishing Dublin in 1992 just short of my 50th birthday in a time of 2:58:50 was by far my most memorable personal achievement. I had climbed my Everest and it was all downhill after that, due partly to a lack of motivation but more to the time necessary to prepare properly, even though I never once exceeded 60 miles a week in training at any stage.

Fast forward again, this time to 2008. I prepared seriously for the first time since 1992, accompanied by and trying to coach my famous clubmate James Landon. I met James, who I didn't know then, totally by chance in Oranmore during summer 2006 and he didn't let up badgering me until I entered and ran the Fields on St Stephen's day later that year and then cajoled me to join Athenry AC. I must admit that I have enjoyed every moment of my membership of this fabulous club since. Training went really well this year - the hunger had returned - and I had aimed realistically for a 4 hour finish. However, the wheels began to come off at 11 miles, at which point I was bang on schedule, for no apparent reason but I struggled on and finished in 4h 35m - a real lowlight. My spirits lifted when James rang me the following Saturday and informed me that I had got silver in my age group - V7, i.e. over 65 - in the National Marathon which was run in conjunction with Dublin. I may have been down but I'm not out. There's life in the old dog yet. I intend maintaining my unbroken contact with the Dublin City Marathon for another year, God willing, and who knows what after that!

Finally, for the record, almost 12,000 entries - one third of them from women - were received for this year's run which started at 9am, as in all recent years, and the souvenir race programme was free for the very first time, compliments of the sponsors.

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Some Scottish newspaper coverage of Paul McNamara's first big city marathon success in Edinburgh in May 2008.



Marathon man leads home from the front **By SANDY SUTHERLAND**

IN March he could finish only 129th in Edinburgh but yesterday, despite cruel conditions variously described as "horrendous", "like being sand-blasted" and "a war of attrition", he was first and in the money!

Paul McNamara (Athenry AC), a 32-year-old Irish cross country internationalist from Roscommon, won the Albert Bartlett Edinburgh Marathon and the first prize of £1000 in his first serious attempt at the distance.

McNamara, whose only previous visit to the Capital had been for the World Cross Championships two months ago when he finished 129th, covered the wind-blown 26-mile course from the city centre to Musselburgh Racecourse in two hours 25 minutes and six seconds to beat surprise runner-up Nathaniel Williams (North York Moors) by 27 seconds, with the favourite, Alabama-based Michael Green (Blackburn) third in 2:26.18. I was hoping for around 2:20.00, I feel I was in shape for that," said McNamara, who has a best 5000 metres track time of 14:06.93 and had once "jogged round" the Dublin marathon.

A stiff and cold easterly wind, which whipped up sand in the competitors' faces as they ran along Portobello promenade, was a daunting addition to the normal rigours of the classic distance and was a problem right up until the turn at the 18-mile point at Gosford House, near Aberlady.

Green was more forthright about the conditions: "To be honest the wind made it into an eight-mile race with an 18-mile run-in," he said.

Edinburgh Marathon breaks records **By MARK McLAUGHLIN**

AROUND 100,000 people turned out to watch the largest ever Edinburgh Marathon wind through the streets yesterday.

This year's Marathon was twice the size of the previous year's event, with 13,000 runners taking part and around 10,000 people turning up at the finish line at Musselburgh Racecourse.

The fastest man was 33-year-old athletics coach Paul McNamara, from Galway in Ireland, who completed the race in two hours and 25 minutes.

The feat was compounded by the fact that it was only the Athenry Athletics Club coach's second Marathon.

Still fresh from the race in his red and white vest and blue shorts, and sporting a pair of now well-trodden running shoes, he said: "I didn't necessarily set out to win - I just went out with the aim of running very fast."

His prize for coming first was the "Tattie Trophy", a gold-plated potato on a plinth, awarded by this year's sponsors, root vegetable packing firm Albert Bartlett.

Paul said: "It did raise an eyebrow when they presented an Irishman with a potato after travelling 26 miles on foot. I'd say it was bordering on discrimination!"

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From Inverin to Boston

Maire Treasa Beatty

As you all know I did the marathon with Croí. There were eleven of us in this team. Larry Kelly and I represented Athenry AC. We all met on Monday morning (21 April 2008) in the hotel lobby at 6.50AM. I am sure you all know Emer O'Byrne; well fair play to Emer she came down all dressed up in her Irish gear - hat, t-shirt and ribbons!!!! She cheered everyone up, you just have to love her.



We walked from the hotel and across Boston Common to line up for the buses. It was a lovely morning and there was a nice buzz around while we waited to get on. On the bus, everyone talked about the weather, how hot it was going to be, and Heartbreak Hill. We were at Hopkinton at 9 and the bus let us off at a wooded area. Needless to say, you all know what the men did: no queues for them!

The Athletes' Village was well spread out so there is loads of room for everyone. You can just sit around eat if you need too. The music is playing and they play requests and all. We went down to the corrals just after 10. It was very relaxing. It all seemed to run so smooth. We started to move up at 10.25. I shook hands with Larry said good luck the gun went at 10.30. Crossed the start line at 10.39 and off we went.

The first 3/4 miles are downhill, so you take it easy. I was amazed at the crowd, from once we crossed the start line they cheered non-stop. I was running at 8:30 pace and was happy out with that. At mile 6 there was a guy singing Neil Diamond's "Beautiful Noise". Thought of you, James (Lundon), and our chat in Ballycotton! That really cheered me up. The crowd and the runners joined in. I met Pat Nash at 10M, said hello but he was running too fast for me so let him off. The next few miles just flew by I was running at a nice pace and feeling good. At around 12M you meet the Wellesley Girls. Never in my life have I heard girls scream like they do. Their screams and enthusiasm would get you going

again and really lift you for another mile. Then you hit 13.1M (half way). I was at one hour and 49 minutes. I was happy with that. At mile 15 I slowed down; it was very hot and up-hill. Just had to settle and sort myself out. I was two hours running now which was 12.30 and you could now feel the heat. Mile 16 and 17 were OK, again you pass the Newton Fire Station where you do a right turn. Mile 18 was up-hill; took me 10:30; mile 19 down-hill. I hit miles 20 and 21 hard, very hard. Heartbreak Hill!!!!

I remember Larry Kelly and Ray O'Connor saying they are not bad - nothing like Connemara. Well they were both WRONG!! Take it from me it is not called Heartbreak hill for nothing. Said a prayer for the two lads! Looking back at it now, I was at 3hr, Larry was nearly finished, that prayer could have slowed him down! I also thought of Brian Bruton; God he would be finished now. Will I ever finish this race????? Soon afterwards, you hit Boston College and, my God, the crowd were truly amazing. They really lift you and tell you that you can do it. You just have to exchange high fives with some of them, it is really amazing. Miles 22, 23 and 24 I did OK, 9:30s. Mile 25, I felt sick and needed water, only one mile to go. When you see the CITGO sign you know you are on the home stretch. It took me 11:14 to do the last 1.2M.

When you turn at Boylston Street and see the finishing line, gee what a feeling. It was great, I could not believe my time: 3:53. Never thought that I would do that. After I crossed finish line, walking in, I felt felt weak. Thought I was going to get sick. I fainted, somehow got into medical tent, got water and came around, walked back to hotel. Got Brandy on the way back and that brought me back to life fully. Larry was back and had finished in 3:10 - a great run. It was a great experience one I would highly recommend to anyone. Would I do it again? Yes!

The Last Words of a Senior Athlete

Ballycotton 2008 Peter Delmer

A blow-by-blow account of my best ever race. Ballycotton 2008, my last race as a senior as I'll hit the big four-oh at the end of the month. Here's what happened.

Mick Rice, Mark Davis and I line up as close to the front as possible but are still swallowed up in the crowd. By race-start we are nine or ten rows back from the gun and that's probably ideal. Mick continually beats into me the mantra of not going out too hard. He knows I'm chomping at the bit and tries to ensure I don't expend all my energy in the first few miles. I take it in but make no commitments. Of course he is right, but it's a balancing act between what's too fast and what's just plain slow.

The three adversaries shake hands and wish each other luck before heading out to do battle with the sound of the start-gun ringing in our ears. It takes about four interminable seconds to cross the start line. Like a wound-up spring I want to burst forward from the line but instead find that I'm hampered by a surge of bodies and can only pace myself with the crowd. It takes a lot of concentration to stay vertical and not trip in the heaving humanity but vertical I remain and after about 600 metres I begin to find a yard of space. The narrow streets of Ballycotton are ideally suited for crushing 2000-plus bodies together when all they want to do is get running.

As the space opens up I take stock. I believe that Mark has disappeared into the crowd ahead of me and I'm fairly sure that Mick is somewhere just behind me but I can be certain of neither of these facts. Consumed with finding a balance between propelling myself forward at a rapid pace and not wasting energy with sideways movement, I carry out delicate overtaking manoeuvres. At this stage of the game chaos is the order of the day ñ I am running alongside some, passing more and being passed by others. I spy a mark on the thoroughfare indicating that the first 800 metres has passed in just under three minutes - a little slow but there's downhill ahead. Now I'm running. We pass the



school and the outer reaches of Ballycotton village and descend to the plains. You never get to warm up properly for this race as there's a definite lack of space in which to do so and an overwhelming urgency to be in place at least thirty minutes before the 1:30pm start, so that you can stake your starting position. This year I managed about ten minutes

jogging back and forth on a short stretch of road and two hurried stride-outs. Now as I approach the first mile marker and encounter the first downhill rush I feel a slight stiffness and wish I'd done more. 5:49 that was a bit slow! I'm targeting 5:42 per mile for a 57-minute finish (brave? stupid? naïve? take your pick!) so a downhill mile should be faster than that.

Fast downhill, watch-your-step and around the first sharp corner to hit the flat stuff. I'm now steadily passing people and am beginning to target groups ahead of me. There's a stiff breeze abroad so I'm already working hard but on my seventh annual run on this hallowed course I know the wind will be at my back for the second half of the race. I race forward catching a group of runners, resting in for a while in their midst and then moving to the front of the group and on towards the next bunch. So passes mile two in 5:44. Better.

As I move towards the third marker a thought occurs to me. In the lead-up to this race I had tried to run the course in my head on a few occasions but always found it difficult to visualise the middle miles. Sure I could recall the start and finish sections but the middle miles are not imprinted in the grey matter. Now I realise that all I am taking in is the immediate stretch of road in front of me, the awareness of bodies around me, the fine-tuned attentiveness to my breathing and perhaps a target singlet ahead of me. I don't see the fields, the cattle, the occasional huddle of spectators, the farm entrance, the blue sky or the new-born lambs. I see road.

5:52 for the third mile. I'm worried. I'm not dawdling

here. I've been consistently passing people. The body clock tells me not to push much harder than this, but I'm not hitting my target splits. This early in the race it should be easy! By now I'm not passing people so easily. I've apparently hooked up with a tall man in a bright orange top. I immediately christen him Holland-guy because a severe lack of blood to the brain completely stifles anything more creative than that. I need every spare drop of blood to fuel the legs. Holland-guy pushes forward and I try to draft behind him into the headwind but there isn't much shelter to be found. We continue to reel in other runners. 5:49 at the fourth.

On towards half-way at the back gate into Ballymaloe House. By now our team of two has swelled to three, perhaps four. Somewhere along this mile we join a larger group and I commit the terrible sin of falling asleep in motion. You must make allowance for the fact that never before had I run Ballycotton this fast and I am in uncharted territory. Even though I am overtaking people all the way, an inherent lack of confidence convinces me that I cannot keep doing this and that I must assimilate into the Borg. Who am I to be passing talented athletes? I allow myself to drift into a group and I slow down.

Wake up! I notice that Holland-guy has opened a gap on me and I snap out of it. I close ranks and begin to pull away from the magnetic group that almost captured me.

5:54 for the fifth mile. My slowest yet. I know it's windy but I thought I'd be faster than this. I realise that if I am going to run a personal best today then only a negative split will do. That means I have to run the uphill second-half faster than the 29:08 I've just run for the downhill first-half. Yet I am strangely confident. Having trained harder than ever before over a continuous four month period I know there's strength in the legs that was never there before. Having burned out two solitary Tuesday evening ten-milers on the track in 60:07 and then 59:31 I knew I was in personal best shape. My previous best is only two months old - a 57:30 effort in Mallow in early January - but it's old enough to be bettered!



We round a bend in the road after the fifth mile marker and encourage the crowd of onlookers to whoop it up a bit as we pass. I find myself in a group that has loosely stuck together for some time now and I'm delighted to hear somebody suggest that we work as a group. Wind is pushing us forward, two guys at the front are beating out a rhythmic pace, I rest in behind them and we hit the sixth mark in 5:42. For the first time in the race I have managed to hit my target pace.

Now the group begins to work. We take a turn at the front, we exchange encouraging grunts, we rest-in and we push back to the front again. Strangers locked in a running camaraderie. I wouldn't give an inch to these guys were we close to the finish, but for now we run as one. I check the watch twice at seven miles to verify that it really says 5:37. This is a hot pace.

No bad patches yet. I continue to run smoothly. But this is not one of those races where you feel you're floating along either. I'm really working here - on the edge but not yet over the edge. Our tightly-knit group catches knots of runners and leaves them in our wake. Invincible? No! Confident? Hell yeah.

I notice Mark ahead. He's a long way ahead but I know that I haven't seen him since the start line so I must be gaining on him. Mark becomes target #1.

Mark Davis is a very fast runner. Pound for pound he'll beat me any day, but I know that his training is a balancing act between hard work and remaining injury free. I now realise that today is possibly the best chance I'll ever have to get ahead of him and I resolve to do so. Our little hard-working group is breaking up. I haven't seen Holland-guy for some time. A broad shouldered man wearing a black top is leading us forward and, as far as I can tell, only two of us are with him. Blacktop exhorts us forward to catch a couple of runners perhaps 30 metres ahead but for the first time in the race I cannot respond. I quickly decide to let him go and he ploughs the lonely path forward alone. I know that I am running as fast as is possible at this stage and am unconcerned that a stronger runner can pull away from me. Good luck to him. I see Mark ahead.

I pass the eight-mile mark with a 5:33 split, the fastest to date. I've reduced the gap to Mark considerably and I note that my #1 target slows a little to take on water. I begin to rehearse a few words of encouragement in my head. I want to motivate him, certainly, but not enough that he'll find a second wind and romp home ahead of me! I say a few words as I pass and am relieved to see that he doesn't give chase. Target #1 reverts in my mind to being the gentleman that he truly is and he urges me on as I notice the hill looming ahead.

I have a plan for the hill back into the village this year. I'm going to take it easy. In previous Ballycottons I have succumbed to the adrenaline rush of the approach to town and given my all on that short, sharp hill. I have then paid the price in the final yards as lactate-laden legs seize up and wiser athletes rush by. With an uphill mile-and-a-half to go I remember my plan and ease up that rise. I tuck in with an English runner from South London Harriers and we meet the welcome sight of the nine-mile marker with a 5:47 split. The tailwind must have pushed us up.

One mile to go and here's the deal. I've ascended the steep bit and am on the uphill drag. I'm racing London-guy (no my creative juices cannot come up with a better name as I've more important stuff going on right now). I'm flat-out racing and determined to catch a few more on the run in. I register Maeve on the right hand side of the road with a camera and am greatly encouraged as she shouts me on. I hit the 1000m mark and I become a running machine. This has happened me many times in the past. All detail is shut out. I am simply running. I hear no sounds. 800 to go. I see no landmarks. 600, 400. I know I've one lap of a track to run. I am deprived of sensory input but run to the 200 mark. Now I push and attempt to sprint to the line. Mild disappointment registers as I surge towards the clock and see that 57 minutes have passed and the seconds are rushing forward. For the first time I am the person-passing-people and not the person-being-passed at the end of Ballycotton. I hit the finish line and in two steps I come to a violent stop - I can go no further.

The last surreal mile took 5:34. A new personal best by nine seconds in 57:21 but there's more to come. Stewards help, cajole and push me forward through the finishing chute. Exchanging congratulatory handshakes with the runners around me, I glance at the clipboard where finishing positions are being recorded. They must be on the second page of results because there's my number in the second column near the top of the page. Hold on it says I've finished 29th! No way. I'm hunted forward by the stewards and as I go I check my race number and then steal a look at the second clipboard. Sure enough I'm 29th. Incredible. The happiest man in Ballycotton picks up his mug and starts to float. I haven't come down yet.

5:49 - 5:44 - 5:52 - 5:49 - 5:54 - 5:42 - 5:37 -
5:33 - 5:47 - 5:34 Total 57:21 (29:08 - 28:13)

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