



2016 All Ireland Junior & U23 Championships

Date: 3rd July 2016

All roads lead to Tullamore last weekend with the staging of the All Ireland junior and U23 championships on Saturday 2nd July and the juvenile pairs and relay national finals on Sunday 3rd. In action for Dundalk St Gerard's AC were Kate & Meabh O'Connor, Enya Silkena, Abaigh Moonan and Grainne Moran.

First in action was 15 year old Kate O'Connor in the junior championships. In spite of giving away years to most of her rivals Kate was far from out of place in the competition with accomplished displays all round. In the high jump she coped well in the cool conditions with an excellent best effort of 1.65m to take the silver medal. In the long jump once again Kate showed her class with a solid series of jumps to take the bronze medal. Her last event of the day, the 2-0m was always going to be a big ask. With Kate moving down from middle distance recently, having to face numerous older athletes many of whom had international experience at sprint distances was a tough task to take on. Nonetheless Kate showed tremendous speed and tenacity to qualify for the final finishing 3rd in her heat. In the final she gave another strong display finishing outside the medals but underlying her all round potential.

If that wasn't good enough later in the day it was confirmed that Kate had been selected to represent Ireland in the heptathlon at the upcoming European Youth Championships in Tbilisi, Georgia. This is a tremendous achievement and just reward for all the hard work Kate has put in to get herself up to such a high level. For while it takes a special talent to achieve this it also takes a massive effort on the athletes and coaches behalf. Everyone at the club is very proud of this wonderful honour which Kate has achieved.

In the juvenile games the clubs four participants performed with great credit in their events. In the U10 pairs long jump Enya & Meabh went one better than last year with an excellent silver medal winning performance. In the 500m the girls put in another strong effort to just miss out on the medals in fourth. Grainne and Abaigh also teamed up and performed strongly in the U10 pairs 60m and 500m events. In the relay the girls were hoping to repeat their heroic medal winning performance of last year where they finished 3rd. In their heat they showed up well to take a fine 2nd place to qualify for the final. In the decider the girls repeated the dose with an excellent performance to storm home for a fantastic silver medal going one better than last year. If these young girls continue their hard work there is no reason why they cannot take the no.1 spot next year.

The previous weekend Kate O'Connor and Patience Jumbo-Gula were picked to represent Leinster in the Tailteann games interprovincial competition. As a further honour Kate was picked as the captain of the Leinster girl's squad. Both girls had excellent performances on the day helping their team to victory in the competition. Kate was impressive in winning the long jump and javelin competition and ran an excellent leg on the victorious 4 X 300m relay team. In the 100m Patience had a marvellous victory in a tight contest in a new PB of 12.09 seconds. In the 200m she gave another strong performance to take second in another PB of 24.98 seconds, going under 25 for the first time. The excellent performances were rewarded with selection for the Irish squad for the upcoming schools international in London on July 16th. Kate was also in line for selection however given her participation at the European Youth championships on the same date she was unavailable to compete. The club are very proud of these brilliant achievements by the girls and wish them the very best of luck in their upcoming competitions which will be great learning experiences for them.

Training continues every Tuesday & Thursday in Young Ireland's GFC on Hoey's lane near DKIT at 6:30pm
New members welcome.

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