



2013 Louth Juvenile Athletic Championships

Dates: 10th to 12th May 2013

The County Juvenile athletic championships took place last weekend commencing on Friday night in Drogheda followed by two full day program which were held at Bush track. Dundalk St Gerard's AC was represented by 27 young athletes over the three days with no less than 8 making their competitive debut. Donning their new club hoodies and taking advantage of the new tent to shelter from the changeable weather conditions the team showed equal measures of style and substance by being noticed on and off the track.

First into action on Friday night was reigning All Ireland Champion Kate O'Connor in the u14 girls javelin where she continued where she left off last year with another excellent county title in a new championship best of 33.54m. On Saturday she took part in the 800m where she gave another imperious performance to cruise home to an impressive victory. On Sunday her fabulous run of form continued with a great victory in the long jump and excellent 3rd place finish in a very hot 200m contest. Newcomer Nimi Apesin gave a number of highly promising displays in her events in the u14 girls category. In the 80m she finished a close up 3rd place in her heat against experienced rivals and turned in two remarkable performances to finish 4th in the shot putt with a throw of 8.96m in a competition which was of a provincial level standard and 5th in the long jump. Watch this space there is a lot more to come from this young lady.

The u9 girl's squad included debutantes Ciara Gorham and Amy Toal who were joined by Emma Whately. The girls gave stellar performances all round in the 60m, turbo javelin and long jump competitions but missed out on their 200m race because they were having too much fun & craic. The u10 girl's squad was made up of first time competitor Catelyn Byrne alongside Aoife & Ellie Gorham. Catelyn & Ellie stormed through their heats to reach the semi-finals and Aoife gave her all but just missed out. In the semis Ellie was just run out of it but Catelyn blasted through to the final where she put up an astonishing performance for one so inexperienced to take a great 3rd place. Ellie went on to take a great 3rd in the new turbo javelin event where Aoife continued on an upward curve with a new pb, which she also achieved in the long jump with Ellie also to the fore.

The girls u11 squad comprising of Patricia Jumbogula, Ellen Murphy & Emma Coleman had a very busy afternoon. First up they took their places in the huge field for the 60m, Emma & Patricia breezed through but poor Emma got left at the start and missed out. Both girls made the final where they finished just out of the medals with Patricia making the mistake of easing up and having 3rd snatched from her late on. In the long jump all 3 performed well with Ellen taking a great silver medal. Patricia took a great bronze in the turbo javelin with Ellen having no luck with the new implement. Emma ran a super race in the 600m where she bravely battled all the way to finish in 4th place. In the u11 boys competition Conor Toal was the sole representative and he gave his all on his debut and showed great promise for the future.

The club was represented by no less than 5 girls in the u12 section with Leah Fannin & Maria Smith who were having their first outings being joined by Alana Duffy, Katie Murphy & Laura-Jane Hearty. All girls performed with distinction. In the 80m Katie & Leah had no luck in their heats. Laura Jane blasted into the semi with a solid display but just missed out on the final. Alana & Maria were drawn in a very tough heat with Maria amazing the crowd by coming through strongly and repeating the dose in the semi to qualify for the

final. Alana was unfortunate to just miss out despite running well. In the final Maria again wowed the onlookers by belying her inexperience to take a fabulous silver medal in a very strong field. Laura Jane, Leah & Katie performed with great credit in the shot putt with Katie proving the pick with a fine display for 3rd place. In the long jump Alana, Maria & Laura Jane gave their all and with all 3 achieving PB's in far from ideal conditions for jumping. All 5 competed in the 600m where they showed great promise and no little courage in a big field, a point which was emphasised by the rapturous applause they all received on their return to the club tent for some well-earned rest. Alana competed in the turbo javelin on Sunday and with some more work on her technique will be able to challenge for honours given her phenomenal natural strength and athleticism.

In the boys u12 events newcomer Jamie Wynne and Oisín Byrne along with the more experienced George Maas & Cameron Moran had a brilliant weekend with all 3 bagging individual medals. In the 60m all 3 ran super races just missing out on places in the final with Jamie & Oisín showing great potential. Cameron, George and Oisín took part in the shot putt and showed the benefit of the many hours great work of the clubs throws coach Christian Maas' in finishing in 2nd, 3rd & 4th places. In the turbo javelin Cameron took a marvellous gold medal with George agonisingly close in 4th place and Jamie a great 6th place. All 3 then performed with great credit in the long jump with Cameron just nudged out of a medal in 4th and Jamie & George just behind. Feeling left out being the only one of the trio without a medal Jamie set about his task in the 60m hurdles and was rewarded with a fine 3rd place finish.

Patience Jumbogula cruised through the heats & semi-finals in the girls u13 80m. In the final she executed a perfect race giving another amazing display of speed to record a wide margin victory which bodes well for the upcoming provincial championships. In the shot putt despite being below her best she picked up a great bronze medal in an excellent field which was more like provincial than county level. Caitlin Mulholland ran an astute race in the girls u14 1500m using her boundless reserves of stamina to come from off the pace to finish strongly in 6th in a very competitive race. In the long jump she joined the long list of the clubs athletes who achieved new PB's over the weekend with a jump of 3.66m.

If there was a competition for best humoured athlete there is no doubt that Kate Smyth would be a strong contender. However with her performances in the girl's u15 section over the weekend she proved that there is a lot more to her than just a great personality. In the 100m & 200m she came agonisingly close to a medal in 4th & 5th places, but her perseverance was rewarded with a wonderful gold medal in the long jump which took place in driving rain.

Luke Gorham continued his comeback from a long layoff from injury with a gutsy display to take bronze in the boys u14 800m showing glimpses of a return to form and showing that he still has an abundance of speed which will serve him very well when he gets some more training under his belt. Joseph Peters faces a spell on the sideline after having to pull out of the 80m (when holding a winning chance) due to another muscle strain having just come back from injury. All at the club wish him well in his recovery.

Scott Dorian showed he is maturing like a fine wine with his best ever county championships in the boys u16. Starting on Friday evening with the javelin he set the tone with a new pb of 30.31m to take gold following that up with a fine 3rd in the long jump. In the shot putt he finished in 4th missing out on 3rd by 1cm. Last up on Sunday was the 200m where he moved out of his comfort zone to take a great silver and complete the full collection of medals.

The excitement of the relays is one of the biggest attractions of track and field. The club fielded 5 girls squads but unfortunately no boys teams. First up was the girl's u9 team of Amy Toal, Emma Whately, Ciara Gorham & Robyn Gorham. The girls breezed round to rapturous applause to take a great gold medal. The u10 team of Catelyn Byrne, Emma Whately, Aoife Gorham & Ellie Gorham ran their hearts out to take a gallant 4th place on their first outing together. The u11 team of Ellie Gorham, Emma Coleman, Ellen Murphy & Patrica

Jumbogula gave a Lazerus like performance to qualify for the final after recovering to qualify for the final in dramatic fashion after dropping the baton. In the final they gave a tremendous performance to hold off a determined challenge all the way from Dunleer in a great race.

In the u12 event the club had 2 squads. Team 1 comprised of Ellen Murphy, Leah Fannin, Katie Murphy & Laura Jane Hearty while team 2 was made up of Maria Smith, Emma Coleman, Patricia Jumbogula & Alana Duffy. In a pulsating finish team 2 held off the challenge of a very strong Boyne AC team to record another victory for the club with Laura Jane charging home for team 2 in 5th. The u14 girls squad of Nimi Apesin, Kate O'Connor, Caitlin Mulholland & Jumbogula were going to be really up against it facing some real quality and experienced squads. They steamed into the final where they proved that was no fluke by blasting to victory beating a very strong Blackrock team who have gone a number of years unbeaten within County Louth making their achievement one they can be rightly proud of.

The club would like to thank all our athletes and their parents for all their efforts and perseverance in the bad weather conditions overall. Their spirit and camaraderie shone through even though the sun might not have. Lastly the only downside of all the wonderful achievements of our athletes is we are going to have to listen to club throws coach crowing about all the medals in his disciplines. Only joking Christian we love to hear it, and thanks for all your hard work.

Training continues every Tuesday & Thursday at Young Irelands GFC, Hoeys Lane 6.30 to 7.30.