



## 2014 Louth County Championships

**Date:** 4<sup>th</sup> May 2014

The first two days of the Louth juvenile athletic championships took place on Friday evening and Saturday last the 2nd & 3rd of May at the Lourdes stadium, Drogheda and Bush. Twenty eight young athletes took to the track(and field!) to represent their club and support their teammates. As per usual the competition was stiff and standards high with every club in the county well represented. The squad was a mix of inexperienced and more seasoned campaigners who all did themselves and their club proud.

First up on Friday at Drogheda's Lourdes stadium was Scott Dorian in the U17 boys category. Despite not jumping to his full potential(most likely due to having competed in the North Leinster schools championships earlier in the afternoon)he secured a bronze medal with a satisfactory start to the season. In the javelin he took a good 2nd place and was 4th in the shot putt to end a very busy days competition. Patricia Jumbo-Gula & Ellen Murphy surpassed all their opponents in the U12 girls high jump with excellent performances. Patricia proved the stronger on the night, needing to produce a PB of 1.20m to see off her teammate in an exciting duel to make it a great 1-2 for the club. Kate O'Connor followed up on her double gold earlier in the week in the North Leinster schools with a great win in the U15 girls javelin. In the high jump she took a very good silver medal, jumping the same height as the winner Dunleer's Emma Cheshire, but losing on the count back. Kate Smyth who earlier in the afternoon along with Kate O'Connor had been part of the silver medal winning St Vincent's relay team in the schools championships took a fine silver in the U16 girls long jump. The joker in the pack Ruari O'Connor got down to serious business with an impressive 22m plus throw to win the boys U13 javelin on his maiden voyage in the event with George Maas taking an excellent bronze to join his great friend and teammate on the podium. These great performances by this talented septet with all medaling set the tone for the rest of the team to go into day 2 brimming with confidence.

Day 2 at Glenmore AC's Bush track started off a busy programme with the highly anticipated sprint competitions. In the U9 girls, Iseult Wilson & Robyn Gorham both ran well but just missed out on a semi final place. Ciara Cunningham made the final, winning her heat and semifinal on the way. In the decider she once again used her brilliant speed and power to great effect to take a great silver medal. In the long jump all 3 girls did great with Ciara once again making the podium with a bronze medal finish. The turbo javelin provided another challenge for the trio with all girls giving a good account of themselves. In the 200m Robyn & Iseult ran good races with Ciara taking another excellent 2nd place in the final, having won her heat previously. Hely Rasandratana & Aaron Clarke flew the flag for the boys in the U9 competition. Both boys did really well in all their four events: 60m, long jump, turbo javelin & 200m. Hely continued to show good improvement qualifying for the semifinal in the 60m and just missing out closely on making it into the decider. Aaron also fared well and experienced the highs and lows of competition

after launching a fine effort in the turbo javelin but crucially he unfortunately stepped over the line and the throw was deemed a foul and a medal was snatched from his grasp.

Patrick Barry & Niall Bastible Diaz took part in the boys U10 & U11 turbo javelin, 60m &, long jump with both doing their level best in some very competitive events. Neil McCarron & Conor Toal competed in the boys U12 division. Both ran their hearts out in the 60m & 600m in their first county championships. Conor also took on the shot putt where to his great delight he took the gold medal and county title. Fresh from their success the previous evening George Maas & Ruari O'Connor were joined by Jamie Wynne in the boys U13 events. In the shot George took the silver with Ruari in third for bronze. Jamie ran a very strong heat in the 60m and George did likewise and can build on the experience for the coming season. Jamie went on to give another solid performance in the 600m to finish off his days work. Scott Dorian made up for a slow start to finish strongly for 4th in the u17 boys 100m.

Sophie Bastible Diaz, Emma Whately & Sharon Wilson competed in the girls U10 events. All three girls put in stellar performances on the day. Sharon got through the heats and semifinal to give another strong effort in the final. Emma made the semi with Sophie getting edged out in her heat. In the long jump, turbo javelin & 200m the girls gave more encouraging performances. Eimear Farrell, Ellie Gorham & Aoife Gorham all showed up really well in their events also in the U11 girls category. Ellie was unfortunate to break twice in the long jump with her best efforts which might well have put her in the medals.

Emma Coleman, Ellen Murphy & Patricia Jumbo-Gula took part in one event each in the girls U11 competitions. Emma bowed out in the heats in a close run affair in the 80m. Patricia made her way to the final winning both her heat and semi on the way. In the final she showed great form and determination to cut down her rivals late on to win in a very close finish to take her 2nd gold of the weekend. Ellen took another medal also with a bronze in the shot putt. Maria Smith swept to the final in the girls U13 80m with an impressive win in her heat. In a high quality decider this very popular athlete romped to victory to shouts of delight from all her teammates. In the 600m Maria was joined by Laura Jane Hearty. Both girls took contrasting tactical approaches with Maria boldly setting a breakneck pace in front and Laura Jane taking a more conservative approach, employing waiting tactics at the rear of the field. The hot pace began to tell in the last 100m and the tiring Maria bravely kept going for 2nd place with Laura Jane running on really well doing all her best work at the finish. Patience Jumbo-Gula was back doing what she does best burning up the track, winning races and wowing the crowd. In the u14 girls 80m she made it a family sprint double with another accomplished display to win, having done the same in the North Leinster schools championships for St Vincent's earlier in the week. Caitlin Mulholland took a good silver in the U15 girls 800m getting caught out by a swift break by the winner on the last lap after an unsuitably pedestrian first lap. In the U16 girls 800m Kate Smith took another silver with a composed run from gun to tape.

The clubs relay teams once again showed their fighting qualities to deliver strong performances. The girls U9 Team of Robyn Gorham, Iseult Wilson, Meabh O'Connor & Ciara Cunningham took a fine 3rd place. In the girls U10 race Sophie Bastible Diaz, Emma Whately, Ciara Cunningham & Sharon Wilson teamed up for a great 3rd place with Ciara taking her 5th medal of the day, proudly showing off more bling than a gangsta rapper. The girls U13 squad of Emma Coleman, Maria Smith, Laura Jane Hearty & Patricia Jumbo-Gula put in a barnstorming finish to just miss out on a gold with a great 2nd place. The

boys u13's took a hard earned bronze with Ruari O'Connor anchoring the team home and George Maas, Jamie Wynne & Neil McCarron doing their bit as well.

This was a great showing for the club and will give great confidence going into the final day of the championships at Bush next Saturday. The only downside of all these great performances is that picking the athlete of the year is going to be even more difficult, infact there might be some good competition for best athlete in the O'Connor & Jumbo-Gula households. But, that's a problem we'll happily live with!

Training continues every Tuesday & Thursday at Young Irelands pitch from 6.30 to 8PM. New members welcome.

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