

Irish Life Health Irish Schools Title for Casey



The Irish Life Health Irish Schools Cross Country Championships took place on Saturday 10th March 2018 in the WIT Carriganore Sports Campus, Waterford. Munster athletes competed very well with top 3 finishes by **Dylan Casey, St. Flannan's College** who won gold in the Junior Boys with his twin brother, **Dean** close behind in the silver medal position. **Tommy Fennell, St. Augustine's College** took silver in the Minor Boys race with silver also for **Emma Landers, Pobalscoil na Trionoide** in the Junior Girls race & **Niamh O'Mahony, Presentation Tralee** in the Inter Girls race.

In the Minor Girls race, our top finishers were **Aisling Healy, St. Flannan's College** (6th) and **Avril Millerick, St. Mary's Midleton** (10th). **Tommy Fennell, St. Augustine's College** won silver in the Minor Boys race with 4th place for **Cian Hodgins, St. Joseph's CBS Nenagh**, 6th place for **Tadhg Connolly, Abbey Community College** and 9th for **Tom Walsh, St. Joseph's CBS Nenagh**. **Emma Landers, Pobalscoil na Trionoide** won silver in the Junior Girls race with an 8th place finish for **Shauna McCarthy, Kilorglin CS**, 9th for **Ellen Cunneen, St. Mary's Nenagh** and 12th for her twin sister, **Ellen**. Clare twins, **Dylan and Dean Casey, St. Flannan's College** scored a 1,2 in the Junior Boys race with 5th place for their team-mate, **Luke Griffin** which saw St. Flannan's take gold in the team event. In the Intermediate Girls race, there was silver medal for **Niamh O'Mahony, Presentation Tralee** with 9th place for **Tara Ramasawamy, Presentation Waterford** and 12th for **Rachel Hosey, Castletroy College**. **Tommy Connolly, CBC** was our best finisher in the Intermediate Boys race when he finished 7th. In the Senior Girl's race, **Laura Hayes, Loreto Fermoy** was 4th with **Sorcha Moloney, Presentation Thurles** in 8th place, **Alannah Neff, Carrigaline CS** in 10th & **Anna O'Connor,**

Waterpark College in 11th. Our best finisher in the Senior Boys competition was **Charlie O'Donovan, Colaiste Christ Ri** in 6th place.



In the team competitions, Munster schools took home 3 gold medals with wins for **St. Joseph's CBS Nenagh** in the Minor Boys, **St. Flannan's College, Ennis** in the Junior Boys & **Waterpark College** in the Senior Girls. **Pobailscoil na Trionoide** and **St. Mary's Nenagh** won silver in the Minor and Junior Girls categories with bronze for **Pobailscoil na Trionoide** in the Junior Girls competition. **John the Baptist Community School** were 4th in the Minor Girls with **Colaiste Christ Ri** occupying the same finish in the Senior Boys with 6th place finishes for **Ard Scoil na Deise** in the Junior & Intermediate Girls competitions and the **Presentation Thurles** in the Senior Girls. 7th place finishes went to **St. Flannan's College** in the Minor Boys, **De La Salle Waterford** in the Junior Boys, **Douglas Community School** in the Inter Boys, **Ursuline Thurles** in the Senior Girls & **Midleton CBS** in the Senior Boys. Both **St. Augustine's College** and the **Loreto Fermoy** scored 8th places in the Minor Boys and the Inter Girls. **Thurles CBS** were 9th in the Junior Boys with **St. Augustine's College** in the same place in the Inter Girls.



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Healy makes history in Carriganore

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Healy makes history in Carriganore

Sarah Healy (Holy Child Killiney) made light of the mud and hills to make history at the Irish Life Health All Schools Cross Country Championships at the WIT Arena in Carriganore today (March 10).

Healy's talent has bubbled over the surface in 2018 and she won the senior girls' 2,500m by just under a minute in 9:26 to become the first athlete to ever win minor, junior, intermediate and senior cross country titles. Full results are [HERE](#).

Siofra Cleirigh Buttner won six cross country titles in-a-row but that was before the minor age group was introduced – winning two junior, two intermediate and two senior.

Still it was as much in the manner of her victory where athletes of good calibre were literally resorted to walking one of the steep sections on the backend of the course while Healy ran as smoothly as she did when winning the national senior indoor 3,000m title in record time.

Abbie Taylor (Wesley), who finished fourth at the recent European Clubs Cross Country, had to settle for a good second place finish with Niamh Ni Chiardha (Colaiste Iosagain) in third. Waterpark College won out the team title.

Heavy rain overnight and in the morning gave way for the races that begun at midday with the sun breaking out. Again the weather did no favours with favourites faltering throughout the day.

There was no stopping Sophie Quinn (Mount Sackville) in the first race of the day as she won the minor girls' 2,000m with Amy Geoghan (Mercy Kilbeggan) in second and Christin Ni Mhoran (Colaiste Iosagain) in third. Strathearn Belfast were strong winners of the team on 50 points.

Oisin Duffy (Lumen Christi, Derry) was a striking figure in his yellow and blue singlet and he dashed over the mud to gold in the minor

boys' 2,500m. Tommy Fennell (St Augustine's) was second with Joel Chambers (Nendrum Col, Comber) in third. Cian Hodgins in fourth led St Joseph's CBS Nenagh to the team title.

There was plenty of tooting and froing in the first two races but the big swings took place thereafter in position as a result of both physical and mental toil. It truly did paraphrase Rudyard Kipling's line "If you can keep your head when all about you are losing theirs, you'll be a cross country runner."

And in the midst of that Eleanor Godden (Loreto Kilkenny) came from behind in the junior girls' 2,500m to win ahead of Emma Landers (Pobalscoil na Trionoide) and Cara Lavery (Thornhill College, Derry). Godden also had the pleasure of leading Loreto Kilkenny to team gold.

The Casey twins, Dylan and Dean, were not to be denied in the junior boys' 3,500m as they went one-two and captured the team title to boot with St Flannan's College, Ennis. Oisín Toye (Deele College, Raphoe) had a brave run to hold on to third.

You can't always win and that's part of the learning process and development. For Aimee Hayde (St Mary, Newport) she came a cropper after charging to a seemingly insurmountable lead in the intermediate girls' 3,500m and was unfortunately unable to finish. She will come back for better days.

And this took nothing away from a fine victory for Maeve Gallagher (St Joseph's, Castlebar) who started the mid race-card success for Connacht. The triathlete held off Niamh O'Mahony (Presentation Tralee) at the finish with Holly Brennan (Sacred Heart, Drogheda) third. St Dominic's, Cabra won the team title.

There was another surprise victor in the intermediate boys' 5,000m where Michael Morgan (Summerhill College Sligo) gave Connacht another win with a classy performance. He beat Louis O'Loughlin

(Moyle Park College) Miceal McCaul (St Colman's, Newry). Belvedere College created their own little bit of history by winning an All-Ireland schools team title for the first time in a good battle with St Malachy's.

Of course there was no denying Sarah Healy and that left us with the final race of the day – the senior boys' 6,000m. Grass and good running was scarce but that didn't stop Efrem Gidey (Le Cheile SS Tyrellstown) from gliding to victory. It was a truly heart-warming story as not too long ago Gidey was in a refugee camp in Calais.

Darragh McElhinney (Colaiste Phobail Bheanntairi) suffered by keeping with Gidey and did not finish. Sean O'Leary (St Aidan's) pushed the pace early and had an excellent run for second Keelan Kilrehill (Colaiste Iascaigh) finished third. He again was another in competition for the fairytale story as three years ago he broke his back coming off his bike and was nearly in danger of never walking again. Colaiste Mhuire, Mullingar made it three senior titles in six years led by Jamie Battle in fourth.

And to the victors went the spoils while many had to go home and suffer for their toils. But that's all part of the journey and this drew to a conclusion the cross country season. Attention will turn towards the track.

Top 3 Results

Irish Life Health All Ireland Schools Cross Country, WIT Arena, Carriganore

Girls

Minor 2,000m

S Quinn (Mount Sackville), 2. A Geoghan (Mercy Kilbeggan), 3. C Ni Mhoran (Colaiste Iosgain).

Team

Strathearn Belfast, 2. Pobalscoil na Trionoide, 3. Mount Sackville.

Junior 2,500m

E Godden (Loreto Kilkenny), 2. E Landers (Pobalscoil na Trionoide), 3. C Lavery (Thornhill Col, Derry).

Team

Loreto Kilkenny, 2. St Mary's Nenagh, 3. Pobalscoil na Trionoide.

Intermediate 3,500m

M Gallagher (St Joseph's Castlebar), 2. N O'Mahony (Presentation Tralee), 3. H Brennan (Sacred Heart Drogheda).

Team

St Dominic's Cabra, 2. Loreto Grammar Omagh, 3. Loreto Kilkenny.

Senior 2,500m

S Healy (Holy Child Killiney), 2. A Taylor (Wesley College), 3. N Ni Chiardha (Col Iosagain).

Team

Waterpark College, 2. Loreto Kilkenny, 3. Wesley College.

Boys

Minor 2,500m

O Duffy (Lumen Christi, Derry), 2. T Fennell (St Augustine's), 3. J Chambers (Nendrum Col, Comber).

Team

St Joseph's Nenagh, 2. St Kieran's Kilkenny, 3. Lumen Christi, Derry.

Junior 3,500m

D Casey (St Flannan's, Ennis), 2. D Casey (St Flannan's, Ennis), 3. O Toye (Deele Col, Raphoe).

Team

St Flannan's College, Ennis, 2. Campbell College Belfast, 3. St Colman's, Newry.

Intermediate 5,000m

M Morgan (Summerhill College Sligo), 2. L O'Loughlin (Moyle Park), 3. M McCaul (St Colman's, Newry).

Team

Belvedere College, 2. St Malachy's College, 3. Colaiste Einde.

Senior

E Gidey (Le Cheile Tyrellstown), 2. S O'Leary (St Aidan's), 3. K Kilrehill (Colaiste Iascaigh).

Team

Colaiste Mhuire, Mullingar, 2. St Malachy's College, 3. Blackrock College.