

Tipperary Juvenile Athletics

All Ireland Un-Even Age Juvenile Cross Country Championships

On a strength sapping course in Waterford, Aimee Hayde, Newport, once again displayed an exceptional front-running performance to capture the U/15 Cross Country title. Cian Hodgins, Nenagh Olympic also confirmed his undoubted talent with a third place finish in the Boys U/13 race and leading his County colleagues to national silver. Kate Ferncombe, Dundrum showed her potential with a 9th place finish in the Girls U/13 race for a national bronze medal with Tom Walsh, Nenagh Olympic, Shane Buckley, Dundrum, Daire O'Donnell, Moycarkey-Coolcree, Emma Murray, Coolquill along with Aimee, Cian and Kate all collecting national medals with successful Munster regional teams.

Success does not come about without hard work, dedication and ability and Aimee Hayde, Newport has shown this to be true with a simply stunning performance in her event on Sunday. Having won the U/16 title a couple of weeks ago, the pressure to repeat that success in the U/15 event was immense, but such is Aimee's professionalism that she did not allow this pressure to influence her in her race plan as she treated the spectators present to a great front running performance. Whilst others might disagree, the outcome, bar any unforeseen circumstance, was a foregone conclusion once the first 200mts of the race was run as she simply proceeded to put distance between herself and the remainder of the field. She extended this lead throughout the race and crossed the line over 150mts ahead of the next nearest athlete. A truly wonderful performance from a class athlete. Well done Aimee.

Tipperary are blessed to have quality in-depth at U/13 Boys level and this shone through on Sunday with an exceptional performance from Cian Hodgins, Nenagh Olympic. Having kept with the leaders throughout, he timed his effort to perfection, using every ounce of strength, determination and speed over those final metres to finish third and claim the National bronze medal. Congratulations Cian.

Another athlete to shine on Sunday was Kate Ferncombe, Dundrum who produced a terrific performance in the Girls U/13 event. Always with the leading group, she never let up, and her reward for such a courageous performance was a top ten finish. Kate came through for 9th place overall and earned a highly sought after National bronze medal. Well done Kate.

As already mentioned above, Tipperary are very strong at U/13 boys level and this strength bore fruit on Sunday with a top class performance from all the Boys on the team to lead Tipperary to 2nd place in the team competition – a mere one point from the gold. Following Cian's third place we had his team-mate Tom Walsh finishing 19th closely followed by Shane Buckley, Dundrum in 21st. Ben Walsh, Nenagh Olympic came through for 26th with Joe Egan, Moycarkey-Coolcree in 34th and James Doyle, Thurles Crokes 41st to clinch these silver medals. In addition to the above and also showing their class were Aaron Moore, Moyne in 44th, Oisín Shelly, Moyglass 84th, Jimmy Ryan, Moyglass 136th, Dara Kennedy, Newport 136th and Michael Moylan, Nenagh Olympic 155th.

While everyone who took part on Sunday was representing Tipperary with distinction we also had a number of athletes who also qualified to represent the Munster province and many of those athletes brought further honour to the County with their outstanding performances. Daire O'Donnell, Moycarkey-Coolcree finished an excellent 18th in the Boys U/11 event to finish 5th scorer on the Munster team that finished 3rd. Kate Ferncombe following her 9th place overall was the fourth scorer on the Munster team that won the gold medals. Cian Hodgins, Tom Walsh and Shane Buckley were all scoring members of the U/13 Munster

team that finished 2nd while Aimee along with Emma Murray, Coolquill were part of the victorious Munster U/15 team that claimed the gold. Well done to all involved.

Tipperary Girls U/11 team finished 10th overall in the Inter-County competition with Abigail O'Regan, Carrick-on-Suir leading them home in 29th place overall. Her club mates Rachel O'Meara and Clodagh Shanahan Rice came through for 40th and 68th respectively with the Moyne duo of Saoirse Doran and Alana Spillane finishing 82nd and 100th. Coming through for 111th was Caoimhe Stakelum, Thurles Crokes with Rachel Buckley, Clonmel 120th and Ruby Kelly, Dundrum 147th. Abigail was a member of the Munster team that finished 4th.

The Tipperary Girls U/13 team finished 6th in their event with as already mentioned above Kate Ferncombe in 9th place followed by her team-mate Millie Kelly in 35th. Saoirse Walsh, Newport finished 47th with Leah Quane, Moreabbey Milers in 51st followed by Orla Ryan, Dundrum in 75th and Ruby Carroll, Clonmel in 89th.and Jane O'Donnell, Clonmel 99th. Completing the squad were Jane O'Donnell, Clonmel in 99th and Helen Cleere, Moyne 109th.

With just six athletes from the County competing at U/15 level great credit is due to all on their performances to bring Tipperary to 8th place. As already mentioned above Aimee Hayde finished 1st followed by Emma Murray in 14th. Ailbe O'Neill, Nenagh Olympic came through for 36th followed by Emma Gleeson, Moyne in 78th, Gillian Hughes, Clonmel 93rd and Aine Duggan, Moyne 113th.

Tipperary also had individual athletes in action with Charlie Tobin, Newport 28th in the Boys U/11, Siobhan Whelan, Clonmel 20th in the Girls U/17 event, Ciara O'Neill, Clonmel 26th in the Girls U/19, Bjorn Downes, Moreabbey Milers 30th in the Boys U/19 and Ben O'Dwyer, Moycarkey-Coolcree 56th in the Boys U/19 and all are to be complimented on their performances.

Just one club from the County, Nenagh Olympic, qualified a team in the Inter-Club competition and with the likes of Cian Hodgins, Tom Walsh, Ben Walsh and Michael Moylan making up their squad no-one could bet against them be amongst the leading contenders and that was the way it turned out as they finished an excellent 5th in the boys U/13 competition. Well done to the boys involved.

The final cross country competition of the year, the All Ireland "B" Championships take place on 11th February 2018 and no doubt some of the above athletes will make an impression in that event.