

37 All Ireland Medals for St Senans AC.

Dundalk Institute of Technology was the venue for the recent B All Ireland's. Far away it might be and an very early start we might have had – St Senans Athletes allowed neither the 6.30am start nor the 3 hour journey impede upon their ability to contest and conquest victories over this 3rd and final national cross country event.

With a mild day but sticky, muddy underfoot conditions, the course was well laid out – our girls u/11 fresh from their 3rd place in last week's Leinster Cross Country Relays were first out of the starting pens. The team finished a very creditable 4th place, led home by Caoimhe Phelan in 14th place. Rounding off an incredible season for this athlete who will still be eligible for this race next year. Kilkenny finished 2nd county with Caoimhe, Libby Murphy, Sophie Williams, Grace Ramsamawy and Sophie Monahan all making the county team. Rumour had it that they wore the medals around their necks going to bed – they were so delighted.

Individual, club and county medals were awarded to our boy's u/11. David Williams worked his way from the middle of the field on a gradual basis to come home in a comfortable 3rd place. If he was exhausted the smile on his face certainly did not show it. He was followed by Naoise Gilmartin in 10th place. Again grinning from ear to ear Naoise showed no signs of fatigue. Thus we had two individual medals in this race as individual medals are awarded to the top 12 in each race. Fast finishing Ben Wallis, along with Shane Morrissey, Eoin Aylward and Eoin Dempsey completed the team to get into 2nd spot. And to top this off, all the boys were on the county team that finished in 1st place. Well done to all the boys for the hard work and great days racing.

The boys u/13 finished 5th in the club section led home by Josh Fenton in 17th place. Josh is returning to form and determined to get into the medals next year. We all love that determination in an athlete and the club is fully behind this popular young man. The county was in 3rd place with great running from Josh, James Foot (just returned from altitude training in Austria), Jack O'Neill, the fast improving Ryan Cummins and shot putt supremo Tadgh Connolly – all scoring on the team.

The girls u/15 showed that spark they displayed when they finished 3rd in the Nationals a year ago in the same venue. Perhaps it was the memories of that brilliant day that inspired and motivated them to a return to form. Hampered by injuries over the last year, there were no sign of those injuries as Tara Ramsamawy fought hard all the way to finish 3rd. Closely on her heels was Aoife Allen in 8th place and Aine Phelan in 12th. Three athletes in the top 12 – not bad for a days work. Sophie Jackman and Nell Murphy made up the club team – to take them into 2nd place. The county also took the silver with all the girls scoring.

The Inter County relays were also held in Dundalk with Saoirse Allen on the girls u/12 team that finished 2nd. Saoirse ran a brilliant first leg to hand over the baton in 1st place.

The most remarkable thing about our conquests in Dundalk was that all 23 athletes took home at least 1 medal each, some exceeding that - bringing our total medal haul for the day to 37 medals. Making this our most successful ever B All Ireland's. No wonder the mood on the bus was jubilant. We wish all the athletes much and continued success for the coming track and field season.

A note to all our athletes – should you wish to compete with St Senans for the 2016 season you must get your registration forms and money to the coaches immediately.

Fixtures

Jan 28 East Munster Schools Cross Country WIT Waterford

Jan 29 Kilkenny County Board AGM

Feb 5th County Board Awards 7.30pm Pembroke Hotel Kilkenny.

Feb 6 St Senans AC Awards night – 7.30am – registered athletes only.

Feb 13/14 Leinster Indoors AIT Athlone

Feb 21 Kilkenny Cross Country Relays (TBC)