



## **Club Captain's report to Clonliffe Harriers 2025 AGM**

I'm pleased to report on another stellar year for Clonliffe Harriers. Our athletes had really some outstanding performances domestically and internationally including at the pinnacle of our sport, the Olympic Games. Our athletes have won national titles in the 2024/2025 year and our men's teams secured national team titles, and we have also seen our own club records raised to even greater heights.

We have athletes competing in every aspect of our sport: track and field, both indoor and outdoor, cross country and on the road. There are opportunities for athletes to compete across a range of disciplines and at a range of standards with Dublin Athletics providing graded meets, the Irish milers club having a couple of meets per annum and Leinster and national championships. There is also a sackful of road races, several per weekend in fact and cross country from novice through to senior, and at junior, senior and master level. In addition throughout the course of the year the club itself provided excellent opportunities for athletes, not only in respect of the Clonliffe Grand Prix series under the outstanding stewardship of our club president but also our own club Championships on the track and on the country.

To present a report to AGM involves leaving more out than in as I try to contain this report to the highlights from April 2024 through to March 2025. I am also in the interests of brevity confining the report to national championships, club Championships and international performances. To include in this report every details would run this meeting into the small hours of tomorrow morning.

### **National Road Championships**



April 28 – the men’s team of Colm Rooney, Fintan Kerins, Efrem Gidey and Ian Guiden successfully retained the national road relay championship in Raheny, although this was a comfortable win the team did not let up indeed the winning time of 37.00 was the 2<sup>nd</sup> fastest time recorded on this course. The club fielded a record 7 senior men’s teams. In the Masters M35 race the team of Tom Sherlock, Cathal McHale and Niall Sherlock took national silver. We fielded 3 teams in the Masters M35 race and another 3 teams in the M50 race. That’s 13 men’s teams!

May 18 – the national 5K Championships took place in the Phoenix Park, with Colm Rooney 2<sup>nd</sup>, Ian Guiden 5<sup>th</sup>, Stephen Cashin 9<sup>th</sup> and Mahad Egaal 13<sup>th</sup> the team successfully retained the title.

June 24 – National 5 mile championship, Phoenix Park, the men’s team of Ian Guiden, 3<sup>rd</sup>, Sergiu Ciobanu 10<sup>th</sup>, Tom Sherlock 29<sup>th</sup> and Sean McGarrity 36<sup>th</sup> took national bronze.

February 13 – the Clonliffe men’s team made history at the Armagh international 5K Road race becoming the 1<sup>st</sup> Irish team to win – the team was Efrem Gidey, Colm Rooney, Stephen Scullion and Stephen Cashin.

March 17<sup>th</sup>- Dublin 5k road novice c’ships Tallaght, Lee Duddy was the Dublin Novice Champion and the team of Lee, Stephen Lyons, Robert Mackey and James Dunne won the team.

March 23<sup>rd</sup> – National 10k in Dunboyne Colm Rooney M40 gold in 29.41, Irish M40 record.

### **Track and field 2024:**

June 29/30<sup>th</sup>: National senior track and field championships Cathal Doyle won his 3<sup>rd</sup> successive 1500 title. Silver medals were won by Efrem Gidey in the 5000, Simon Galligan in the hammer and Kyran Maher in the pole vault and U/20 athlete Davey Davitt took bronze in the 400 hurdles.



July 28: the men's team regained the national track and field league title in Tullamore with standout performances from Marcus Lawler winning both the 100 and 200, the 100 win was a Stadium record of 10.28, David Donegan rolled back the years to win the pole vault with a best of 4.10m, Simon Galligan won the hammer, Naill Alan won the shot and excellent performances across the boards with a special mention of the 2 youngsters Christopher Lynch in the 400 and Lorcan Benjacar in the 3000 steeplechase.

August 4 – National U/20 Davey Davitt 400 bronze.

August 5 – National Masters: David Donegan M40 pole vault gold with a fine 4.01, Niall Allen M50 discus gold, M50 shot gold and M50 WFD gold.

### **Cross country:**

October 6 – Dublin novice cross country team bronze (Darragh Carter, Cian Murray, Ronan Donohue, Lee Duddy).



November 3 – Dublin senior cross-country at City West, the senior men's team of Stephen Cashin, 2<sup>nd</sup>, Ian Guiden 4<sup>th</sup>, Fintan Kerins 5<sup>th</sup> and Sergiu Ciobanu 10<sup>th</sup> won the Dublin title for the 6<sup>th</sup> successive year. The U/20 men's team of Matei Ursachi 6<sup>th</sup>, Sean Cronin 7<sup>th</sup>, Tom Breslin 8 and Lorcan Benjacar 9<sup>th</sup> made it a Clonliffe men's double.



November 17 – a disappointing day at nationals for the senior men saw the team finished in a distant 6<sup>th</sup> position with a scoring 4 of Efrem Gidey 6<sup>th</sup>, Sean O'Leary 32<sup>nd</sup>, Colm Rooney 37<sup>th</sup> and Ian Guiden 50<sup>th</sup>. A much better day however for the U/20s led home by Ronan Luff 10<sup>th</sup>, Sean Cronin 18<sup>th</sup>, Tom Breslin 21<sup>st</sup> and Matei Ursachi 37<sup>th</sup> to take the national U/20 title.

December 1 – National novice cross country, Tramore racecourse, the team of Ben Guiden, Darragh Carter, Killian Keegan and Cian Murray finished well down in 13<sup>th</sup> position.

January 5 – Dublin intermediate and masters cross country at St Anne's Park. The intermediate team took Dublin silver (Evan Lynch 8<sup>th</sup>, Dymtro Moyseyve 10<sup>th</sup>, Ronan Donohue 11<sup>th</sup>, Harry Davies in 13<sup>th</sup>. Colm Rooney was a class apart in the Masters M35 taking a fine individual win, the team of Colm, Karl Nolan, Cathal McHale and Tom Sherlock took Dublin silver. In the M50 race Kevin O'Connor silver, Philip O'Doherty M60 silver, David Dunwoody M55 bronze, as the team finished in 4<sup>th</sup> position. The M65 team of Diarmuid Doyle, Declan Murray and Pat Devitt took team bronze with Pat Devitt taking M70 silver.



February 2 – European clubs cross country, Albufeira, Portugal where our U/20 men's team did the club proud finishing 7<sup>th</sup> of the 21 clubs competing. Tom Breslin was 27<sup>th</sup>, Sean Cronin 29<sup>th</sup>, Lorcan Benjacar 33<sup>rd</sup> and Matei Ursachi 60<sup>th</sup>.

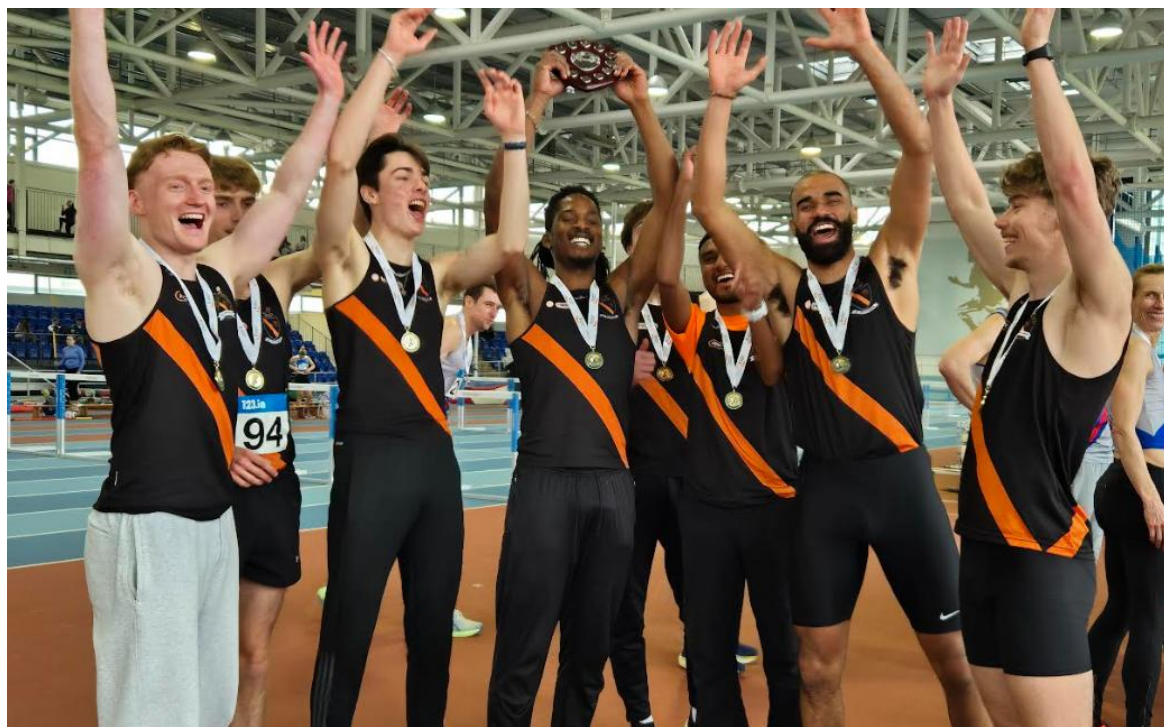
February 9<sup>th</sup> – National intermediate/Masters cross country, Westport, Co Mayo. The intermediate men's team of Ben Guiden 6<sup>th</sup>, Sean Doran 9<sup>th</sup>, Eoin Maguire 17<sup>th</sup> and Cillian Keegan 23<sup>rd</sup> took national silver. The master M35 team led home by individual winner Colm Rooney, with Sergiu Ciobanu 7<sup>th</sup>, Cathal McHale 14<sup>th</sup> and Karl Nolan 16<sup>th</sup> won the national title.





### **Indoor season 2025:**

February 8 – the men's team were indoor league champions for the 3<sup>rd</sup> successive year, excellent performances again across all events and although the only when we won on the day was Niall Allen the WFD however solid points scoring across every event delivered the title by 11 points.



February 22/23<sup>rd</sup> – national senior championships: Cathal Doyle was again the national 1500 indoor champion, retaining his title. Marcus Lawler won the National 200 in a new championship record of 20.74. Niall Allen won WFD bronze.

March 8 – national Masters indoors: Niall Allen M50 shot and WFD gold, Andrej Dmitrenko M55 pole vault gold, George Maybury M70 800 gold, Diarmuid Doyle M65 800 silver and 1500 bronze, David Dunwoody M55 800 silver, Niall Sherlock M40 3000 and 1500 bronze, Michael Omakobiov M40 400 bronze.

March 9 – National U/20 and U/23 Championships, Sean Cronin 1500 gold, Lorcan Benjacar 1500 bronze. Christopher Lynch qualified for the U/20 400 final, Joe Flynn qualified for the U/20 800 final and in the U/23 both Craig Duffy and Luca Logue Fonesca qualified for the 60 final.

### **Club Champions 2024:**

100: Keith Pike

800: Sean Carrigg.

1500: Niall Carbery.

5000: Sean Doran.

10,000: Sean Doran.

10 mile: Sean Doran.

Cross country: Colm Rooney.

#### **Club record breakers 2024/2025:**



Cathal Doyle – outdoors 800 (1.46.75), 1500 (3.33.15) and mile (3.52.06).

Cathal Doyle – indoors 1500 (3.37.39), mile (3.53.18).

Marcus Lawler – outdoors 100 (10.28), 200 (20.56).

Marcus Lawler – indoor 200 (20.74).

#### **Athletes of the year:**

U/20 – Davey Davitt.

Track and field – Cathal Doyle.

Road/cross country – Efrem Gidey.



Harrier of the year – Fintan Kerins.

**International representation/performance:**

Marcus Lawler:

Selected for the 2024 European Championships (injury prevented him competing)

2025 European indoor Championships 4 x 400 mixed relay, team finished 5<sup>th</sup>.

Davey Davitt:

2024 World U/20 Championships, Lima, Peru, qualifying for the 400 hurdles semifinals where he finished in 6<sup>th</sup> position. He was also on the 4 x 400 relay team that finished 7<sup>th</sup> in the final.





Efrem Gidey :

2024 European 10,000 Championships, 12<sup>th</sup> position.

2024 European cross-country Championships, 26 place.

National half marathon record set in Copenhagen 60.51 (since equalled)

National 10k Road record – Valencia 27.43.

Cathal Doyle:



1<sup>st</sup> Clonliffe Harrier winner of the Morton mile in a quarter of a century.

1500 Olympic Games in Paris winner of the repechage to qualify for the semi-final where he placed 9<sup>th</sup> in a PB and club record of 3.33.15.

European indoor 1500 Championships Apeldoorn March 2025. One of those nights!

### **Refinement of club structures:**

In conjunction with the juvenile captain we have put in place a structure which provides a clear pathway for juvenile athletes to move forward into the club senior ranks.

This sets out the coaches/groups that athletes are members of before moving on at a particular age into another group.

Athletes will also move into the new groups in September of each year so they can work with the new group/coach for that year's cross country.

There is as always flexibility this is a matter for discussion between the respective captain and coaches.

On the senior end we have now put in place a men's intermediate group coached by Stephen Bateson so that athletes who may not be quite as strong to move directly into the senior group will remain with the intermediate group with the possibility of moving

onwards into the seniors at a suitable time. This intermediate group is also perfect for new members of the club in their 20s.

CLONLIFFE HARRIERS A.C. CLUB STRUCTURE 2025				
MIDDLE / LONG DISTANCE		5K - MARATHON	SPRINTS	FIELD
Male	Female	Male & Female	Male & Female	Throws (J/D/H/S)
Senior	Senior/ Intermediates	Senior / Masters	Junior U17/U20 + Senior Sprint + Jumps	Junior U17/U20 + Senior
Peter McDermott / Gerry Cullen/Alan O'Neill	Noel Guiden / Brian McDonald	Philip Doherty Maurice Ahern	John Shields	Bart Rogers/ Niall Allen
Intermediates		Pamela Cooper/ Ben Lawler	Junior U17/U20 + Senior Sprints	
Stephen Bateson/ Cillian Sheeran		Eugene Coppinger/ Jean Carr	Geraldine Keogh	
Junior U18/U20	Junior U18/U20 Group 1			
Mick Fogarty	Declan Bolton/ Valarie Buckley Group 2 Eugenia Bateson			
U15/U17			U14 / U17	U15/U16
Graham Mahon & Noel Cullen			Anne Murray/ Roisin Hickey	Kieran Lyons
U13/U14				U13/U14
Brendan Byrne / Paul O' Connor / Colin Daly / Greg Hossenny				Kieran Lyons
U12				Juv. High Jump
Gladys Cooper				Michelle Lynch
U9/U10/U11				Juv. Hurdles
Yvonne Manning / Derek King				Sinead McDermott

We also introduced a coaches WhatsApp group which has improved greatly communication.

The division of both track time and lane usage continues to serve us well meaning that we are in a position to cater for the huge numbers we have on the club in safely – there have been a few near misses, but so far so good! I would like to thank sincerely our coaches and athletes for their cooperation on this front.

We do however face challenges on the coaching front, not only do we have a shortage of coaches, particularly in the juvenile rankings, but we could also do with some assistant coaches at senior level to ensure proper succession planning. Any athlete who fancies swapping spikes for a stopwatch please talk to me.

### Morton Stadium:

I am the club representative on the Morton Stadium advisory group. Just to update the AGM, as you may have been aware the stadium has received a €7 million large-scale capital grant. This falls several million short of the sum which was sought by DCU for the proposed development. DCU are currently investigating to see if they can make up any of the shortfall from funds from elsewhere, the sum available will determine what the new structure will look like. Once funding has been finalised an application will then be made for planning permission. In essence what is being sought is the demolition of the



old Clonliffe stand and the construction of a new building which will house a 100m x 8 lane indoor track, and indoor jumps area in particular for vertical jumps including pole vault, meeting rooms and so on. There will be a plaza area that will stretch from the entrance way of that new building out to the wall which will be partially deconstructed. From the club's perspective the downside is the loss of some parking, however there are discussions ongoing with regard to a plan for parking in the stadium elsewhere, also whenever the work does commence there will be inconvenience for a period of the works however the operation of the stadium and the holding of events and training will continue during the course of works.

We have had some issues concerning track cleaning, the provision of 'garages' for the jumps, have also been issues concerning the outside hammer cage, all of these have been addressed. Once again I ask members that if there are any issues at all with regard to the stadium don't just grumble about it but please bring it to my attention by way of email and I in turn will take up matters with DCU direct. Any matters that arise will be resolved.

**In conclusion:**



I also want to thank sincerely all of our coaches, from the coaches looking after the U/9 group right up to the senior and master coaches. You do an extraordinary job and all with a fantastic attitude and a great sense of comrade and team spirit. I want to

welcome the new coaches who have joined us this year and wish them every success and enjoyment of our sport with our club. We also had two coaches who retired from the juvenile and junior ranks this year – Leo Hesson and Gerry Carr, they both put in a huge amount of work that has contributed enormously to the success of this club and I want to acknowledge the work that they carried out over a long period of time.

I want to thank every athlete in Clonliffe Harriers, regardless of whether you are simply running in open road races or you are competing at championship level and indeed beyond for representing and promoting our club with such distinction. It is heartening to see so many Clonliffe club vests in open road races. Most of our athletes now wear their club vest proudly in these open road races. The black and amber vest is an advertisement for our club. I want to thank our athletes for being available to compete for the club in championship races, we have been very successful this year but we are hungry for more success – in particular we really have to win the national senior cross-country.

Can I thank the committee for their support of me, my fellow captains Jenny Johnston and Eugenia Bateson. In particular I want to thank Brian MacDonald who has served as treasurer for the past 7 years and has never once turned down any request for funding for our athletes and our club. I want to thank Stephen Bateson for his support and for the work which he carries out as our club secretary, Stephen goes over and beyond the call of duty, not only does he act as secretary, he is also our club registrar, he looks after all of the membership and registration of members with AI, he enters teams for me for national championships, he is of outstanding support at every event – because he's at them all, he looks after gear, logistics, he coaches and he is my fellow car park attendant! I want to thank Mick Kearney who has excelled as club president for these past 2 years, a rock of sense and a font of knowledge. Finally I want to thank my vice captains who have been with me now since I became captain in 2021, both Gerry Cullen and Keith Pike have been a brilliant support to me and to our athletes and frankly without Gerry and Keith what has happened this year simply would not have happened.

With this brilliant team of vice captains, club officers and committee it has welded us into being a brilliant club and has made my job as club captain immeasurably easier.

Sincere thanks to you all.

**Noel Guiden, Club Captain, 24/03/25**

