

GloHealth Irish Schools Titles for McElhinney & Hayde



Darragh McElhinney, Colaiste Phobail Bheantraí & Aimee Hayde, St. Mary's Newport were the standout performers for Munster at the Irish Life Health Irish Schools Cross Country Championships in Mallusk, Co. Antrim on Saturday 11th March. **McElhinney**, ran a superb race in the Inter Boys competition having a turn of pace up the back hill on the second lap that left his rivals in his wake. The sheer pace of the move was a sight to behold as he built a 30m lead in less than ten seconds. From there the Bantry schoolboy extended his lead to win in 20:07. **Aimee Hayde, St. Mary's Newport** put in a super run in the Junior Girls race to take gold and the National title winning in 10.28, 9 seconds ahead of the silver medalist Amelia Kane, Strathearn, Belfast. There were super silver medal wins for **Dylan Casey, St. Flannan's College, Ennis** in the Minor Boys race & **Laura Hayes, Loreto Fermoy** in the Intermediate Girls competition with a brilliant bronze medal for **Stephanie Cotter, Coachford College** in the Senior Girls race.

Podium finishes also went to **Niamh Cunneen, St. Mary's Nenagh (5th Minor Girls)**, **Dean Casey, St. Flannan's College, Ennis (4th Minor Boys)**, **Paul Hartnett, Colaiste an Chraoibhin Fermoy (5th Junior Boys)**, **Jake McCarthy, Pobail Scoil na Trionoide Youghal (6th Inter Boys)**, **Avril Deegan, Presentation Thurles (4th Senior Girls)**, **Claire Rafter, Ursuline Thurles (5th Senior Girls)**, **Fiona Everard, MICC Dunmanway (6th Senior Girls)**, **Charlie O'Donovan, Colaiste Christ Ri Cork (4th Senior Boys)** & **Micheal Power, St. Augustine's Dungarvan (6th Senior Boys)**.

Other Munster athletes who performed very well to finish in the top 12 were:-

- Sarah Hosey, Castletroy College 8th Minor Girls
- Ailbhe O'Neill, St. Mary's Nenagh 10th Minor Girls
- Ellen Cunneen, St. Mary's Nenagh 12th Minor Girls
- Shannon Cotter, Coachford College 8th Junior Girls
- Una O'Brien, Waterpark College 10th Junior Girls
- Tommy Connolly, Christian Brothers College 8th Inter Boys

- Chris O'Reilly, Douglas Community School 9th Inter Boys
- Shauna Dolken, Scoil Phobail Bheara 9th Senior Girls
- Eoghan Beary, Crescent Comprehensive 12th Senior Boys



© sportsfile 11 March 2017. Competitors at the start of the Senior Girls race during the Irish Life Health All Ireland Schools Cross Country Championships in Mullusk, Co. Tyrone. Photo by Hilary McHugh/Sportsfile

In the team competitions, Munster schools took home 1 gold (**St. Mary's Newport**) & 3 bronze (**Presentation Thurles & St. Flannan's College Ennis**). **St. Mary's Nenagh** took the title in the Minor Girls with 7th for Kilrush Community School. **St. Flannan's College Ennis** took bronze in the Minor Boys with 7th for **Thurles CBS** & 11th for **SMI Newcastlewest**. In the Junior Girls, **Rice College Ennis** were 5th, **St. Augustine's Dungarvan** were 7th & the **Loreto Fermoy** came home in 11th. In the Junior Boys, **St. Flannan's College Ennis** were 7th with **Mercy Mount Hawk Tralee** in 8th. In the Inter Girls competition, **Loreto Fermoy** were 4th, **Colaiste Muire Ennis** were 6th & the **Ursuline Waterford** finished 8th. In the Inter Boys competition, the **Christian Brother College Cork** finished 6th, **St. Flannan's Ennis** were 7th & **Thurles CBS** 9th. In the Senior Girls race, there was bronze for the **Presentation Thurles**, 4th place for **Waterpark College** & 5th place for the **Ursuline Thurles**. **St. Flannan's Ennis** were 3rd in the Senior Boys with **Colaiste Christ Ri Cork** in 6th & **Waterpark College** in 8th place.

Report Taken from AAI Website dated Saturday 11th March 2017

Healy and McElhinney deliver on memorable day in Mullusk

Sarah Healy (Holy Child Killiney) and Darragh McElhinney (Colaiste Pobail Bheantraí) lived up to their favourites billing on a thrilling day of races at the Irish Life Health All Ireland Schools Cross Country Championships in Mullusk today. For full results click [HERE](#)

Underfoot conditions were soft but still with plenty of good running on a mild day in Mullusk that provided a perfect backdrop and an excellent test of strength and skill.

There was plenty of drama, thrills and spills with Cara Lavery (Thornhill College, Derry) and Dylan McBride (Grosvenor GS, Belfast) getting the day off to a great start with 'home' victories for Ulster in their respective minor girls' 2,000m and minor boys' 2,550m races. Lavery had overcome Victoria Lightbody (Wallace HS) who did much of the running and was left on her hand and knees at the finish with her spirited exertion. McBride was never headed in a front-running display.

Aimee Hayde (St Mary's Newport) bolted out of the traps in the junior girls' 2,550m and hung on to take gold in a titanic battle with Amelia Kane (Strathearn, Belfast). Neasa Reilly (St Vincent's Dundalk) ran strongly for bronze.

Then the drama ensued in the junior boys' 3,600m where Sean Donohue (St Declan's Cabra) recovered from an accidental collision with Seanie Dalton (Malahide CS) where he was left entangled in the course rope on the top end of the course. Donohue recovered quickly where both schoolboys were shocked but it was the St Declan's man who had the strength of mind and body to add the junior crown to his minor title from last year in Sligo. Matthew Whelan (Naas CBS) made it a Leinster 1-2-3 where St Malachy's Belfast triumphed in the team contest.

That cued the interval for the medal presentation of the first four races and left the crowd in anticipation of the appearance of Sarah Healy and Darragh McElhinney in the intermediate races. The intermediate girls' 3,600m started off at a slow pace and the bunched runners saw another tumble with pre-race favourite Healy hitting the sod. She rose quickly with muddied legs and minus a spike but clicked into gear to gap the field. Off she ran with one spike on her right foot and her blue sock on the left getting muddier with every stride. Healy would not be headed as Laura Hayes (Loreto Fermoy) ran strongly for silver with Annie McEvoy (Loreto Kilkenny) coming up for bronze. Abbie Taylor who was prominent throughout faded in the latter stages to 12th but still had the consolation of leading her school Wesley College to the team title.

Darragh McElhinney was touted beforehand in the media for the intermediate boys' 5,200m and he showed why with a turn of pace up the back hill on the second lap that left his rivals in his wake. The sheer pace of the move was a sight to behold as he built a 30m lead in less than ten seconds. From there the Bantry schoolboy extended his lead to win in 20:07 from Connacht's Keelan Kilrehill (Colaiste Iascaigh) who was surely the comeback story of the day in second in 20:34. A year and a half ago Kilrehill had a broken back and here was his

magnificent return for silver in Mallusk. Ulster champion Sean Corry (Omagh CBS) held on for bronze in 20:48 with St Malachy's coming out on top once more in the team race.

Sophie Murphy (Mount Anville) dominated from the gun to win the senior girls 2,550m in 10:05 from her DSD club mate Jodie McCann (Institute of Education) in a repeat of the Irish Life Health Leinster Championships. Stephanie Cotter (Coachford College) sprinted for bronze ahead of Avril Deegan (Presentation Thurles). Loreto College Mullingar won the team title.

Fintan Stewart (Lumen Christi, Derry) had never finished in the top ten of an All Ireland Schools Cross Country Championships but that didn't deter the Derry schoolboy who triumphed in the senior boys' 6,500m in 24:21. The race started slowly for the first half before bursting into life with Patrick McNiff (Banbridge Academy) getting the silver and Jamie Battle (Colaiste Mhuire Mullingar) getting up for bronze. Battle also had the pleasure of leading Colaiste Mhuire Mullingar to the team title.

It truly was a fantastic day of racing with absorbing team contests keeping the large crowd enthused right until the very end.

Top 3 individual and team results

Girls

Minor

Cara Laverty (Thornhill College, Derry), 2. Victoria Lightbody (Wallace HS, Lisburn), 3. Eimear Maher (Mount Anville)

Team

St Mary's Nenagh, 2. Wallace HS, Lisburn, 3. Scoil Chríost Rí

Junior

Aimee Hayde (St Mary's Newport), 2. Amelia Kane (Strathearn, Belfast), 3. Neasa Reilly (St Vincent's Dundalk)

Team

Loreto Kilkenny, 2. Loreto College Mullingar, 3. St Columbanus College

Intermediate

Sarah Healy (Holy Child Killiney), 2. Laura Hayes (Loreto Fermoy), 3. Annie McEvoy (Loreto Kilkenny)

Team

Wesley College, 2. Loreto Kilkenny, 3. Strathearn, Belfast

Senior

Sophie Murphy (Mount Anville), 2. Jodie McCann (Institute of Education), 3. Stephanie Cotter (Coachford College)

Team

Loreto College Mullingar, 2. Victoria College Belfast, 3. Presentation Thurles

Boys

Minor

Dylan McBride (Grosvenor GS, Belfast), 2. Dylan Casey (St Flannan's, Ennis), 3. Joe Byrne (Gorey CS)

Team

Omagh CBS, 2. St Malachy's Belfast, 3. St Flannan's College Ennis

Junior

Sean Donoghue (St Declan's Cabra), 2. Seanie Dalton (Malahide CS), 3. Matthew Whelan (CBS Naas)

Team

St Malachy's Belfast, 2. CBS Naas, 3. Rice College Westport

Intermediate

Darragh McElhinney (Colaiste Pobail Bheantraí), 2. Keelan Kilrehill (Colaiste Iascaigh), 3. Sean Corry (Omagh CBS)

Team

St Malachy's Belfast, 2. St Colman's Newry, 3. St Kieran's Kilkenny

Senior

Fintan Stewart (Lumen Christi, Derry), 2. Patrick McNiff (Banbridge Academy), 3. Jamie Battle (Colaiste Mhuire Mullingar)

Team

Colaiste Mhuire Mullingar, 2. Knockbeg College, 3. St Flannan's College Ennis