

# National League Report Rd 1

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*The Kerry mens and womens team made the long journey to Tullamore on Sunday last to compete in the first round of the Woodies DIY national league. This year both teams are in the premier division so all involved knew it was going to be a tough assignment with two very young teams overall.*

*The first events on the day were the short hurdles in which both Ailbhe Courtney and Ben Dennessen recorded PB's to both finish third. Ailbhe had an exhausting morning going straight from that to the high jump where she also finished third, then straight onto the 400 hurdles where another third place and six points were taken and wrapped up her mornings work anchoring the womens 4x100m relay team to fourth with Dearbhaill Foley, Sinead O Connor and Darragh McDonnell. Sinead like Ailbhe had a very busy afternoon going from one event to the other finishing second in both the long jump and triple jump and finishing fourth in the 100m to add five points to her teams cause. Dearbhaill Foley also showed fantastic team spirit to volunteer to do the pole vault an event which she had never done and cleared 1.70m to finish in third place and add a valuable six points to the total; she also competed in the 200m where she did well to finish fifth.*

*In the morning for the men Conal O'Callaghan did well in poor conditions at the time to finish fourth in the long jump, James Nagle did his part for the team when taking all nine points in the hammer even though he was feeling under the weather and Stewart Nolan had a good run to finish sixth in the 400m hurdles. Daniel Clifford was at his usual best winning both the shot and discus, Philipe Barnett called up as a late replacement threw a fantastic PB of over 40m in the javelin to finish third and team manager Shane Delaney did his bit for the team finishing sixth in the 56lb weight. David Hogan was a late call up in both the pole vault and 800m [yes a very strange combination] but did fantastic to finish second in a PB of 3.00m and fifth in the 800m. The last mens field event the triple jump was covered by Michael Godley who finished in sixth place for a valuable three points.*

*Mairead O Neill and Sheila O Donoghue both took seconds in the hammer and shot with Sheila throwing a PB of 10.31m, Sheila also volunteered to do the javelin as we had no athlete available on the day and did well to finish sixth. Karen O Connor finished off the womens throws on the day with another second in the discus. Katie Rogers another late call up due to the unavailability of some first team members competed in both the 400m and 800m and finished sixth in both for a well deserved total of six points. Mary Fitzgearld was lucky to make the start of her 1500m with no warm up done as the event organisers moved the programme ahead an hour but still managed a valiant fourth place. Anna Meria Costello also finished in fourth in the 3000m venturing away from the roads and onto the track where she looked extremely comfortable!*

*The mens sprints are very exciting in Ireland this year probably at the highest standard they have ever been. Conal O Callaghan had his best race of the season so far to finish fifth in a loaded field in the 100m, Colm Lynch also finished fifth in the 200m in his first outdoor competition in over two months due to injury and Cian Foley took a day out from leaving cert study to finish fourth in his 400m. These three also combined with Edward O Carroll in the 4x100m relay to finish fifth but have the ability to do alot better as a very bad baton change hampered there chances of doing well on the day. The last individual event on the day was the mens 5000m where Cian Murphy did well to take third place in his first race on the track this year.*

*The last events of the day were the extremely exciting 4x400m relays. The womens team were up first with Katie Rogers leading the team off. After already running a 400m and 800m it was always going to be a tough task but she got the baton around in sixth place and handed safely to Ailbhe Courtney. Ailbhe as always ran a blinder and had two teams passed within 200m and passed the baton fighting for second to Mary Fitzgearld. Mary showed excellent speed and got upto second place and created a huge gap to the third place team before passing to Sinead o Connor. Sinead obviously wrecked from her days exploits paced herself excellently and sprinted home in the final 100m to keep the fast chasing Megan Kiely of ferrybank at bay to claim a well deserved second place for the team.*

*The mens team were up against some very strong teams but as always acquitted themselves well. Colm Lynch led the team off as he did last season and passed the baton over in third place to Páidí Whelan. After a slow start Páidí got into his running and in the final 100m he started reeling in the teams ahead of him to pass the baton over in a very close third place to late call up Edward O Carroll. Edward ran well and stayed in third place for 300m but the more experienced senior athletes pulled away from him in the final 100m and he passed the baton to Cian Foley in fifth place. Cian still feeling the effects of his earlier 400m paced himself well through the first 300m and kicked home to pass one team on the straight to bring the team home in fourth place.*

*At the end of the day when all points were added the Mens team finished on 92 points and the Womens team on 98 points. In the overall standings the womens team currently place 7<sup>th</sup> and the mens team 9<sup>th</sup>. With only 8 teams to go through to the final after the second round on July 18<sup>th</sup> in Athlone it will take a titanic effort from both teams to make the final but with premier league status more or less already secured for 2011 making the final a bonus with such young teams in only our second year would be a phenomenal achievement for these athletes and Kerry athletics as a whole!*

*The team for the second round on July 18<sup>th</sup> will be picked after the Kerry senior championships on Wednesday June 30<sup>th</sup> and a team training session will be organised between the two dates. The county senior program can be found on [www.kerryathletics.com](http://www.kerryathletics.com).*