

With just one more indoor competition left before the outdoor season begins Kerry athletes took a brief break from training, traded spikes for the good shoes and attended the 2011 Kerry AAI Awards, held in the River Island Hotel in Castleisland last Friday.

Each club was entitled to nominate two juvenile athletes to receive an award and after a season which saw the county pick up numerous Munster and national titles this was a tough job for many clubs to pick out just two athletes. Having been picked out as the best athletes in their club they can take inspiration knowing that this award is often the first on the road to further recognition at county and indeed provincial level.

While 2010 was a successful year all round it was particularly so for the counties teams and this was reflected in the four team awards presented on the night. The boys under 12 Cross Country team of Adam O'Donoghue, Patrick Warren, Fiachra Clifford, Michael O'Leary, David Kenny and Sean Galvin were rewarded for their 3<sup>rd</sup> place finish in the National Championships. Kerry's first ever Munster Junior Women's Cross Country Champions were also recognised, the team made up of Grace Lynch, Brigid Dennehy, Niamh Clifford and Katie Rogers. Two other Cross country teams were honoured, the Men's Novice team which finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in the nationals and the An Ríocht Senior men's team which won the National B Cross Country Championships, showing that Kerry had another strong year at his discipline.

Seven athletes were presented with Special Merit Awards in recognition of their achievements in 2010, ranging from the newcomer Kayleigh Cronin of Spa Muckcross to the seasoned veteran Patsy O'Connor of Tralee Harriers.

Some of the counties athletes who were selected for national teams were awarded as well, including athletes who competed on Schools and Celtic games teams. Coming from a wide range of clubs and disciplines it shows Kerry's impact at a national level in 2010 and many of these athletes will be looking towards international selection again in the future.

The county board had a tough job selecting the overall winners, which was made no easier by the number of national medals won in the previous year. The Juvenile Awards were presented to Mairead O'Neill of Gneeveguilla AC, who was selected to represent Ireland in the hammer at the Cork City sports and to Eoin O'Carroll of Tralee Harriers who won two gold medals at the All-Ireland Schools Championships and earned selection to the National Schools team. The Junior Awards went to Emma Prendiville of Farranfore Maine Valley AC who competed in Moscow at the European Youth Olympic Trials and to PJ Galvin who's consistency also saw him compete at the Schools International in the High Jump. At Senior level the counties top two performers at the National Championships, All-Ireland Champion and Manhattan College Alumni Claire Fitzgerald of Tralee Harriers and All-Ireland bronze medallist Daniel Clifford of Farranfore Maine Valley were the stand out athlete so 2010. Sheila O'Donoghue of Gneeveguilla AC, who won numerous medals at National Masters indoor and outdoor Championships and the Irish and British Masters High Jump champion Jim O'Shea of Farranfore Maine Valley AC were recognised for their fantastic achievements.

The night ended with the quite deserved awarding of the Hall of Fame to Joe Clifford of Farranfore Maine Valley AC. A tremendous athlete, when Joe hung up his boots he took to organising and has the distinction of holding every position on the county board at one time or another. He continues to contribute many hours of tireless work to both the county board and the board of Farranfore Maine Valley, particularly in fundraising; work which he does without any looking for any gratitude. Farranfore Maine Valley AC delegate to the County Board, County Board delegate to the Munster and National Boards, Joe currently keeps club and county members updated with emails on news disseminating for the corridors of power and is also involved in the organising of Run Kerry Run. With his knowledge and experience at work in the background many club and county ventures have succeeded in the past and his induction in the Kerry AAI Hall of Fame is very well deserved. Congratulations are due to athletes honoured on the night. They train and compete without thinking of awards but it is such nights which make the tireless hours of work worthwhile.

**Club-**

**Spa Fenit Barrow-Katelyn McCarthy & Liam O'Donnell**

**Estuary-Darragh McDonnell & Eadoin Wall**

**Iveragh-Adam King & Brian Sugrue**

**Tralee Harriers-Laura Lynch & Danny Pierce**

**Spa Muckcross-Shona O'Brien & Kianan O'Doherty**

**St Brendan's-Michael Grimes & Patrick Gilbert**

**Gneeveguilla-Shannon O'Leary & Aidan O'Sullivan**

**Farranfore MV-Louise Flynn & Denis Hayes**

**An Ríocht-Amy Reidy & Kevin O Donoghue  
Lios Tuathail-Sophie Lynch & Vanessa Dineen  
Star of the Laune-Fiona Doyle & Fiachra Clifford**

**Teams-**

**Boys U12 Cross Country Team 3<sup>rd</sup> Nationals-Adam O Donoghue,Patrick Warren,Fiachra Clifford,Michael O Leary,David Kenny,Sean Galvin.**

**Womens Junior Cross Country Team 1<sup>st</sup> Munsters-Grace Lynch,Brigid Dennehy,Niamh Clifford,Katie Rogers.**

**Mens Novice Cross Country Team 2<sup>nd</sup> Nationals-Cian Murphy,Aodh O Neill,Ed Murphy,James Doran,Tim O Connor,Donal O Callaghan,Arthur Fitzgearld.**

**An Ríocht Senior mens Cross Country Team 1<sup>st</sup> National Grade B-James Doran,Tim O Connor,Donal O Callaghan,Billy O Brien.**

**Special Merit Awards-**

**Sinead O Connor Tralee Harriers  
Allbhe Courtney St Brendan's  
Niamh Clifford Star of the Laune  
Patsy O Connor Tralee Harriers  
Ger Cremin An Ríocht  
Katie O Riordan St Brendan's  
Kayleigh Cronin Spa Muckcross**

**International-**

**Una Marley St Brendan's  
Jonathan Foley Farranfore MV  
Hannah O Sullivan Gneeveguilla  
Clarence Kennedy St Brendan's  
Eilish Fitzpatrick Gneeveguilla  
Eoghan Courtney St Brendan's**

**Cross Country & Road-**

**Juvenile-Brigid Dennehy Iveragh & Cillian O Donovan Iveragh  
Junior-Grace Lynch Iveragh & Jack O Sullivan Farranfore MV  
Senior-Niamh O Sullivan An Ríocht & Cian Murphy Iveragh  
Masters-Mary O Connor An Ríocht & Patrick O Shea Iveragh**

**Track & Field-**

**Juvenile-Mairead O Neill Gneeveguilla & Eoin O Carroll Tralee Harriers  
Junior-Emma Prendiville Farranfore MV & PJ Galvin St Brendan's  
Senior-Claire Fitzgearld Tralee Harriers & Daniel Clifford Farranfore MV  
Masters-Sheila O Donoghue Gneeveguilla & Jim O Shea Farranfore MV**

**Hall of Fame-Joe Clifford Farranfore Mainevalley AC**