

After last years stop off in Santry this year it was the turn of Queens University Belfast to hold the two day Intervarsity track and field Championships. With many athletes facing into exams in the coming days and weeks a long drive from many of the countries far southern based colleges was unlikely. Without doubt Kerry's top athlete and the top performer in the field events of the championships was Clare Fitzgerald of UCC who swept the boards taking 4 gold medals and a championships record in the throws, a feat which hasn't been seen since Jeremy Harper of University Ulster won the exact same events in the men's competition in 2007 at Santry, with only their national records coming in different events.

On Friday evening Clare led the shot putt from the start and had the competition well wrapped up by the end. Coming into her final throw she had only one throw of over 13m, a 13.13 in the 5th round. Last into the circle to throw she unleashed a massive 14.08m to overturn the 13.58m competition record of Eva Massey and will now surely go after her indoor record of 14.99m.

The following morning Clare's onslaught on the UCC record book continued, setting college records in all of the events she competed in. Little opposition was presented to her in any of the events. Rachel Akers languished over 10 meters behind Clare's winning throw of 45.03m in the Discus and she had as emphatic a victory again in the Javelin, her 38.38m throw winning easily and her shortest throw of 33.87m still clearing the silver medal of Emmy Coffey by over 3 meters.

Only in the weight for distance did it look like the chance clean sweep could be scuppered and there only momentarily so. At the half way mark she trailed Rachel Akers who led with 7.52m but in the first throw after the reversal of order she threw her competition winning 7.90 to seal her 4th victory of the championships.

Katie O'Shea of UL made the trip to the championships as well and was on hand for Clare's record in the shot putt. In the 5th round she responded to a 9.98m throw which knocked her into 4th by throwing 10.02m to finish in 3rd position and was just outside the medals in the hammer with a throw of 42.71m for 4th place.

Daniel Clifford was the only athlete to make the long journey from the IT Tralee, driving the 6 hour journey himself. The recent recipient of the IT Tralee athlete of the year Daniel continued his long time rivalry with Luke Mangan of DCU in the shot putt. A layoff due to injury and recent rigors of study have left Daniel short of his competition best in the early rounds with both athletes fighting it out a meter beyond the 3rd best thrower. By the half way stage he was in second place by a narrow margin but was unable to improve in the next 3 rounds and settled for the silver.

The following morning promised to pit him against yet more long standing opponents, Paval Hazler of CIT making a rare appearance in the discus to eventually win with just over 40m. Daniels 43m throw at the recent Kerry Easter Open would have easily secured him the gold medal but the recent days travel was beginning to take its toll. Unable to connect properly with the discus two early fouls set him off balance and he wasn't able to fully recover. Right after this it was into the car and back home for work on some last minute assignments before getting an opportunity to let his hair down and celebrate his 21st birthday.

Clare Fitzgerald - UCC

Shot Putt 1st 14.08 IUAA Record.

8kg weight 1st 7.90 UCC Record,

Discus 1st 45.03 UCC Record

Javelin CF 1st 38.48 UCC Record

Katie O'Shea - UL

Shot Putt 3rd 10.02

Hammer 4th 42.71

8kg weight 5th 6.74

Discus 5th 27.01

Discus

Dan Clifford 35.51m 6th

Shot 2cd 13.33 Luke Mangan 14.45