



NATURAL BORN RACER



Twenty one year David McCarthy continued his impressive progress in the world of middle distance running when claiming a bronze medal in the 5000m at the European U23 Track and Field Championships in Lithuania in July. McCarthy is regarded by some as the next great hope of Irish middle distance running and is a fiercely competitive and ambitious athlete who would love nothing more than to stand on top of a podium and hear the National Anthem and see the Irish tricolour raised. He came close in 2005 when claiming a silver medal in the 800m at the European Youth Olympic Festival in Italy and although the recent Bronze medal was tinged with slight disappointment McCarthy knows that getting a medal of any colour was an impressive achievement considering his lengthy US Collegiate season.

The majority of McCarthy's rivals in Lithuania had raced considerable less than he did in the run up to the championships. It had been a long but impressive season for the Waterford man in the country, indoors and outdoor collegiate circuit. Staying fresh, both physically and mentally, was foremost in his mind but raising his game one last time was always going to be a challenge. It was this challenge that persuaded McCarthy to compete in the 5000m as opposed to what seemed his more favoured 1500m. Having to focus his body and mind on only one more race as opposed to potential rounds of the 1500m was a wise decision by the young man.

On returning from Providence at the beginning of the summer, McCarthy's body was telling him that it had had enough but he kept convincing himself that he felt great. This mental edge is

what defines McCarthy as one who has the potential to be a great athlete. He loves racing and admits in a confident but in no way arrogant way that he believes he is a natural racer. He has the ability to read a race and make crucial split second decisions mid race if required. Added to this Natural Born Racer talent is the crucial cog of his coach, Ray Treacy. McCarthy says Treacy instils an amazing level of positivity and self belief in him. Based in Providence, Treacy is regarded with the utmost respect by the many Irish athletes he has coached.

He discussed race strategy with Ray before Lithuania and they have a great working relationship. McCarthy describes Ray as a coach who has to hold him back. McCarthy wants to go hammering in every session but Ray emphasizes the importance of not leaving your best running on the training track and there have been times when Ray will cut a session short as McCarthy is pushing it too hard.

McCarthy heads back to the US in mid August with cross-country season kicking off in September. A key target in the cross-country season will be the SPAR European Cross Country Championships in Santry in December when that National Anthem may finally get played. All these are building blocks to the ultimate goal of London 2012 with next year's European Outdoor Championships in Barcelona another stepping stone along the way. A European medallist at 800m and 5000m already, the man who famously doubled a schools cross-country title with a 400m title in the same season sees his future at 1500m. How far he goes remains to be seen but Irish athletics fans are looking forward to seeing this exciting talent for years to come.



Sonia O'Sullivan at the European Youth Olympics Festival

Q: How did you feel when you were you asked to be part of the management team for the EYOF?

A: I was really surprised to be asked to be assistant Chef de Mission for Team Ireland at the European Youth Olympics. I saw this as an opportunity for me to get to know some of Irelands young up and coming talent and share some of my experiences with them. I think my presence showed the athletes that I am just a normal Irish girl, just like them and with hard work and determination anything is possible

Q: Having spent over a week at the championships do you feel it will help to prepare these young Irish athletes to deal with the pressures of future Major Senior Championships including the Olympic Games?

A: I think for a number of the athletes this was their first taste of international competition, first time in the call room, first time in a big stadium and so I think when they went through the process in the early rounds they realised this is nothing to be afraid of and they all came back even better in the final rounds. Now the athletes will have in their minds how it works in international competition, from staying in the village, taking buses a long time in advance of the races and keeping focused and positive throughout the experience.

Q: What did you find were the challenges of team management?

A: This team was not very difficult to manage, from what I could see all the athletes came very well prepared and they were not going to throw away this opportunity by giving in to any nerves or doubts. This was also enforced by the very positive Athletics Ireland coaches Karen Kirk, John McGrath and Jim Ryan and medical support of Dr. Rod McLaughlin (team doctor), Dr. Marie-Elaine Grant (Chief Physiotherapist) and Eimear O'Leary (Physiotherapist). Of course it is always difficult when athletes feel that they could have done better, but things can't go perfect for every athlete on every occasion. However I feel that the few athletes that were disappointed came to terms with their situation very quickly and you could tell that next time out they will have learned from the experience and will be determined to achieve a result that they will be happy with. The girls relay team showed the grit and determination to come home with a medal by moving on so quickly and putting aside any individual disappointments and combining in a tremendous team effort on the final day.



Q: What was your highlight of the championships?

A: I think the fact that everyday we came home from the track happy it was the most positive Irish athletics team ever, the desire to win medals and at the very least run pb's was demonstrated throughout the week by every athlete on the team. Ciara obviously stood out achieving a Gold medal and championship record over 1500m.

Q: The Irish Team performed exceptionally well at these championships, do you feel that there is a new winning mentality among the up and coming Irish athletes?

A: Yes I believe there was a positive and determined mindset by everyone on the team and also the team spirit was high and all the athletes were there for each other and cared about each others preparations and performances.

Q: As an athlete who has competed and performed at the highest level, what advice did you pass onto the athletes competing?

A: I didn't give out any specific advice each day, I just came to support the team as much as I could and tried to generate the belief and positive attitude in everyone around the team. It was such a great experience to see so many family and friends of athletes coming to cheer on and encourage every Irish athlete. I think just being around the athletes and they can see that you care and believe in them is enough to ensure that the athletes relax and allow themselves to do what they have already practised in training.

Q: As an Olympic Medallist do you think there are potential Olympic medallist in this talented crop of athletes?

A: I think this is a very early stepping stone to the Olympics. It has shown these athletes that they are capable of competing against and achieving success against other boys and girls of similar age and preparation. There are many steps to take now to the Olympics and some may get their first taste of the Olympics in London but patience and gradual progression is the key, it can take seven years to really be up there with the best so maybe 2016 is the perfect time for these athletes to achieve medals at the Olympics.

Q: How was the atmosphere in the camp?

A: As I said before it was a great team atmosphere amongst the athletes, coaches and medical staff and everyone was positive and wanted to do everything possible to get the best result when they stepped on the track.

Q: As a middle distance athlete you no doubt enjoyed seeing Ciara and Shane make the medal podium, outside of their performances were you impressed with the depth and quality of Irish performances across the other disciplines?

A: I was really impressed with the athletes in events that I probably wouldn't normally sit and watch from start to end, finalists Killian Barry (Hammer), Catriona Farrell (High Jump), Lorcan O'Cathain who improved in every round of 200m to smash his PB 21.79 and finish 5th, Joan Healy so unlucky to miss the medals in the 100m but then to really be so positive with the girls in 4*100m relay and give absolutely everything to snatch the bronze medal on the final day. I was really impressed with Christine McMahon in her 400mH semi and was absolutely convinced that without a doubt she would get a medal and so glad that she came to the final more determined and along with a silver medal lowered her PB to 59.55

Q: Were you aware that before Ciara lined up for the 1500m final that Szabo held Championship Best Performance?

A: Only when it was pointed out to me but I knew Ciara would run a lot quicker than 4:20, so wasn't surprised at how easily she beat the record of Szabo, but very pleased that she did. Ciara is capable of running even faster in a faster race, here she was all alone over the final 400m.

Q: Finally did you enjoy the experience?

A: It was an absolutely wonderful experience, I really wasn't sure what to expect and to be apart of this very special group of athletes is something I will remember for a long time and hopefully will be reminded of each athlete in the years to come as they take steps to the Olympics and rise to the challenges that face them along the way.

Quotes from Nationals

“I had expected David Campbell to take the race out and my plan was that if he made it fast I would wait until the finishing straight to try and go by him. If he took it out slow, my plan was to pick it up with 200 meters to go and again with 100 meters to go. These were the two scenarios that I played out in my head. Then, when the pace was not too fast I put the boot down with about 120 meters to go and luckily I held on for the win.”

“Some people might say there’s a bit of bad blood between us over the Olympic selection last year. He did a lot of talking but I kept my mouth shut and did my talking here on the track today. He feels he was wronged last year and I felt maybe there was an element of being a sore loser about it. But it’s great for the sport that there are two (Irish) guys running 1:45. Dave is world class, I’m just a shade ahead of him and I wasn’t looking forward to racing him because he’s a great competitor and I respect him as an athlete.”

Thomas Chamney – winner of Men’s 800m

“When it’s two boys in the race it’s a game of chess for 700m and then who is the best 100m runner on the day. It came down to a 100m sprint. They may as well have put us in the blocks”

David Campbell shortly after losing out to Chamney in the Men’s 800m.

“I ran the heat to see how I felt but I didn’t feel well. I’m not worried, but it’s just not worth taking a risk at this stage.”

Paul Hession after withdrawing from the 100m with a head cold after running the first round heats.

“I don’t run the distance very often and when I do I’m inclined to tense up as I put so much into it but this was very enjoyable. It’s great coming home to Dublin and run in front of my family and friends. If you ask me, I prefer to run the 400 than the 200 but this victory was ideal in that it was my last race before Berlin. So far it’s been a great season and now I’m looking forward to Berlin and giving it everything there and keep my fingers crossed that it will go well,”

David Gillick after winning the 200m Men’s title

“I’m just thrilled to be actually throwing again. It would have been nice to break 70 metres but I will settle for that because I have three weeks to prepare for the World Championships. I felt I was turning well and hopefully my speed is also nearly back to where it was before the injury. I came close to 70 metres which is the yardstick in terms of the World Championships. I had a foul just outside the sector which was even closer to the 70 but that will only give me a great incentive going to Berlin.”

Hammer champion **Eileen O’ Keefe**

“Hopefully I will do it on the day in Berlin. I’m optimistic and to get a pb is very satisfying because I’m in very heavy training. I’m just back from altitude and I have a lot to be optimistic about. I have invested a lot but you don’t know what will happen in Berlin.”

Women’s Walk winner **Olive Loughnane**.



“My head was not right for one of those races and I trained very hard prior to the others but now I am right on track to do well in Berlin”

Alistair Cragg explains the reasons behind his inconsistent form on the circuit this season just after comfortably winning the Men’s 5000m title.



“I was more nervous about yesterday. I went out and did the double yesterday and then I said today if anything happened it would be a bonus”

Kelly Proper was in philosophical mood after Ailis McSweeney deprived her of a unique treble on Super Final Sunday in the women’s 100m final. Proper had won the 200m and Long Jump on Saturday.

“I’m happy with that. I got my tactics right today and I learned a lot from my 6th place in the European U23’s a few weeks ago. I sat in and was confident with my kick in the last 100m”

Roseann Galligan after winning the women’s 800m final.

IAAF World Championships 2009 - Irish Previews



Derval O' Rourke

Event: 100mH

Personal Best: 12.72

Seasonal Best: 12.90

Previous World Championship Performances

2007 16th 100mH 12.98

2005 20th 100mH 13.23

2003 34th 100mH 13.54

Provisional Start List Ranking 21st



Paul Hession

Event: 200m

Personal Best: 20.30

Seasonal Best: 20.40

Previous World Championship Performances

2007 12th 200m 20.50

2005 27th 200m 21.69

Provisional Start List Ranking 16th



David Gillick

Event: 400m

Personal Best: 44.77

Seasonal Best: 44.77

Previous World Championship Performances

2007 15th 400m 45.37

Provisional Start List Ranking 4th

IAAF World Championships 2009 – Berlin, Irish Previews



Michelle Carey

Event: 400mH

Personal Best: 56.19

Seasonal Best: 56.32

Previous World Championship Performances

2007 28th 400mH 57.10

Provisional Start List Ranking 28th



Thomas Chamney

Event: 800/1500m

Personal Best: 1:45.41 (800) 3:37.67 (1500)

Seasonal Best: 1:45.41 (800) 3:37.67 (1500)

Previous World Championship Performances

Debut

Provisional Start List Ranking 23rd (800m)

40th (1500m)



Deirdre Byrne

Event: 1500m

Personal Best: 4:08.89

Seasonal Best: 4:09.35

Previous World Championship Performances

Debut

Provisional Start List Ranking 38th

IAAF World Championships 2009 – Berlin, Irish Previews



Roisin McGettigan

Event: 3000mSC

Personal Best: 9:28.29

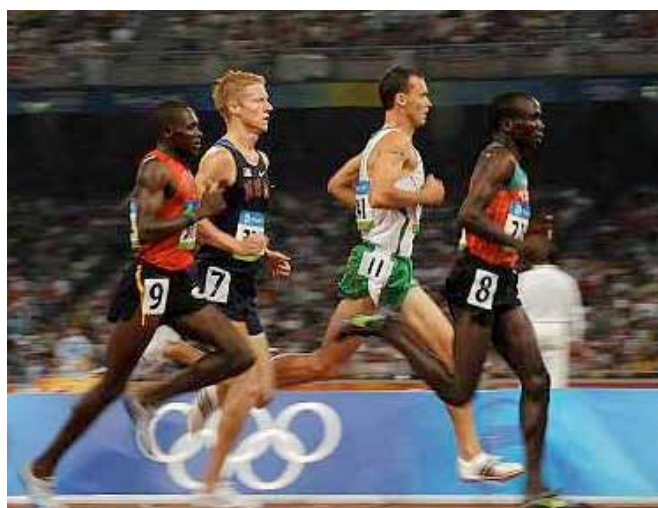
Seasonal Best: 9:56.71

Previous World Championship Performances

2007 10th 3000mSC 9:39.80

2005 26th 3000mSC 9:56.31

Provisional Start List Ranking 41st



Alistair Cragg

Event: 5000m

Personal Best: 13:07.10

Seasonal Best: 13:16.83

Previous World Championship Performances

2007 28th 5000m 13:59.45

Provisional Start List Ranking 20th



Olive Loughnane

Event: 20k Walk

Personal Best: 1:27:45

Seasonal Best: 1:30:57

Previous World Championship Performances

2007 17th 20k Walk 1:36:00

2005 DQ 20k Walk

2003 12th 20k Walk 1:30:53

2001 13th 20k Walk 1:35:24

Provisional Start List Ranking 9th (based on qualifying best instead of seasonal best)

IAAF World Championships 2009 – Berlin, Irish Previews



Robert Heffernan

Event: 20k Walk

Personal Best: 1:19:22

Seasonal Best: 1:23:35

Previous World Championship Performances

2007 6th 20k Walk 1:23:42

2005 DQ 20k Walk

2001 14th 20k Walk 1:25:02

Provisional Start List Ranking 8th (based on qualifying best instead of seasonal best)



Jamie Costin

Event: 50k Walk

Personal Best: 3:50:51

Seasonal Best: 3:50:51

Previous World Championship Performances

2007 DNF 50k Walk

2003 DNF 50k Walk

2001 28th 50k Walk 4:11:58

Provisional Start List Ranking 26th (based on qualifying best instead of seasonal best)



Colin Griffin

Event: 50k Walk

Personal Best: 3:51:32

Seasonal Best: 3:53:54

Previous World Championship Performances

2007 DQ 50k Walk

Provisional Start List Ranking 33rd (based on qualifying best instead of seasonal best)

IAAF World Championships 2009 – Berlin, Irish Previews



Eileen O' Keeffe

Event: Hammer

Personal Best: 73.21

Seasonal Best: 69.91

Previous World Championship Performances

2007 6th Hammer 70.93

2005 24th Hammer 64.09

Provisional Start List Ranking 28th



Deirdre Ryan

Event: High Jump

Personal Best: 1.92

Seasonal Best: 1.91

Previous World Championship Performances

Debut

Provisional Start List Ranking 23rd

Stat Attack



Senior Track And Field Championships 2009 -Placing Tables

Rank	Club	Pts	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th
1	Clonliffe Harriers	124.5	3	5	2	7 ^{Note}	1	3	2	2
2	Crusaders	73.0	5	0	5	0	0	1	0	0
3	Leevale	57.0	2	3	2	1	0	1	0	0
4	Dundrum South Dublin	52.0	3	2	1	1	0	1	0	0
5	Kilkenny City Harriers	49.0	3	1	2	0	1	0	1	0
6	Sli Cualann	49.0	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	0
7	Raheny Shamrocks	47.5	0	1	2	2 ^{Note}	1	3	3	0
8	Ferrybank	47.0	2	2	2	0	0	1	1	0
9	Lisburn	30.0	0	2	0	2	1	0	1	0
10	Ballymena and Antrim	27.0	1	0	1	1	2	0	0	0
11	City of Derry	26.0	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
12	Tir Chonaill	25.0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
13	Star of the Sea	23.0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1
14	Abbey	22.0	0	1	0	1	2	0	1	0
15	Togher	20.0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
16	St Abbans	20.0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
17	Donore	20.0	0	2	0	0	1	0	1	0
18	Galway City Harriers	19.0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1
19	North Laois	18.0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
20	St Peter's	18.0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0

Scoring: Standard IAAF and EAA Placing Table methodology used, e.g., 1st =8pts, 2nd=7pts, 3rd=6pts etc.

Note: Clonliffe Harriers and Raheny Shamrocks had a tied 4th in the Men's Pole Vault