

**Press Release**  
**24<sup>th</sup> November 2009**

### **Irish Team announced for European Cross Country Championships**

Athletics Ireland today announced their team for next month's SPAR European Cross Country Championships, which takes place on December 13<sup>th</sup> in Santry Park, Dublin.

The team will be led by Mary Cullen (North Sligo AC) and Martin Fagan (Mullingar Harriers AC), who have both been named on the women's and men's senior teams. Cullen, who was impressive in taking the Woodie's DIY Inter County title on Sunday, will be joined on the women's senior team by Sli Cualann duo, Fionnuala Britton and Deirdre Byrne. Dundrum South Dublin also has two representatives on the women's senior team with Linda Byrne and Ava Hutchinson set to compete at the European cross country showpiece. The team is completed by Raheny Shamrock's Orla O'Mahony.

Joining Martin Fagan on the men's senior team is his Mullingar Harriers clubmate Mark Christie along with the top three from Sunday's Inter County Championships; Andrew Ledwith (Fr. Murphy's AC), Sean Connolly (Tallaght AC) and Mark Kenneally (Clonliffe Harriers AC).

A spot on the men's senior team has been left open pending Alistair Cragg's performance in San Jose on Thursday after he expressed his desire to be a part of the Irish squad for next month. Mick Clohisey (Raheny Shamrock's AC) is also in contention for the last place on the team, with a final decision to be made on Friday.

The women's U-23 team will be led by Sara Treacy (Moynalvey / Kilcloon AC), who took the U-23 title at the Inter County Cross Country on Sunday in Kilbeggan. Treacy is named on the team along with the Dundrum South Dublin quartet of Bryony Treston, Maria Walsh, Breffni Twohig and Laura Huet, while Roseanne Galligan (Newbridge AC) completes the six.

The men's U-23 team will feature the Inter County champion Michael Mulhare from North Laois AC. Four Dublin athletes join Mulhare on the team with John Coghlan (Metro / St. Brigid's AC), David Flynn (Clonliffe Harriers AC), David Rooney (Raheny Shamrock's AC) and Brendan O'Neill (Dundrum South Dublin AC). The final member of the men's U-23 team is North Belfast Harriers' Stephen Scullion. One notable absentee is West Waterford's David McCarthy who was not considered for selection following discussions with the athlete and his coach.

In the women's junior team all eyes will be on Lisburn AC's Ciara Mageean. The World Youth 800m silver medallist looked impressive as she won the

Junior race on Sunday by 20 seconds from Loughrea's Laura Shaughnessy and Banbridge's Emma Mitchell, who join her on the Irish team. Mary Mulhare (North Laois AC) is also named, as she joins her brother Michael on the Irish squad, along with Eimear Black (Ballymena & Antrim AC) and Dundrum South Dublin's Charlotte Ffrench-O'Carroll.

Irish team manager, Anne Keenan-Buckley, is happy with the team for Santry. *"I am very confident with the team that we have selected. Aside from David McCarthy we have pretty much the team we wanted. We have tried to be fair in our selection and I think we have been so my job now is to try and improve the chances of each of the athletes when they take to the line on 13<sup>th</sup> December,"* Keenan-Buckley said today.

*"Now that we know the athletes we have with us we can start working with them a bit more closely and try and make sure they stay fit and healthy. We have very strong men's and women's senior teams with both Mary (Cullen) and Martin (Fagan) in good form. To see Mary's performance on Sunday was very encouraging. The conditions were very tough but she showed a lot of character to win so well on the day and things have been going really well for her so hopefully she will bring that to the race next month. But across the board we have some great athletes and I think we could be in line for a great day for the Irish in Santry,"* she went on to say.

The SPAR European Cross Country Championships will take place in Ireland for the first time on the 13<sup>th</sup> December in Santry Demesne, Dublin. For more information and regular updates on the event and to sign up to the mailing list for the SPAR European Cross Country Championships then log on to [www.Dublin2009.ie](http://www.Dublin2009.ie).

Athletics Ireland is supported nationally in running this event by the Irish Sports Council, Dublin City Council, Fingal County Council, RT , Failte Ireland and Clonliffe Harriers. Tickets for the event can be purchased from [www.ticketmaster.ie](http://www.ticketmaster.ie)

### **Irish Team – SPAR European Cross Country Championships** **Senior Men**

Andrew Ledwith (Fr. Murphy's AC)

Sean Connolly (Tallaght AC)

Mark Kenneally (Clonliffe Harriers AC)

Martin Fagan (Mullingar Harriers AC)

Mark Christie (Mullingar Harriers AC)

Alistair Cragg (Clonliffe Harriers AC) / Mick Clohisey (Raheny Shamrock's AC)

1<sup>st</sup> Reserve – Alistair Cragg (Clonliffe Harriers AC) / Mick Clohisey (Raheny Shamrock's AC)

2<sup>nd</sup> Reserve – David Kelly (North Sligo AC)

### **Senior Women**

Mary Cullen (North Sligo AC)  
Deirdre Byrne (Sli Cualann AC)  
Linda Byrne (Dundrum South Dublin AC)  
Fionnuala Britton (Sli Cualann AC)  
Ava Hutchinson (Dundrum South Dublin AC)  
Orla O'Mahony (Raheny Shamrock's AC)  
1<sup>st</sup> Reserve – Rosemary Ryan (Bilbao AC)  
2<sup>nd</sup> Reserve – Ciara Durkan (Skerries AC)

### **U-23 Men**

Michael Mulhare (North Laois AC)  
John Coghlan (Metro St. Brigid's AC)  
Stephen Scullion (North Belfast Harriers AC)  
David Flynn (Clonliffe Harriers AC)  
David Rooney (Raheny Shamrock's AC)  
Brendan O'Neill (Dundrum South Dublin AC)  
1<sup>st</sup> Reserve – Ciaran O'Lionaird (Leevale AC)  
2<sup>nd</sup> Reserve – Aidan McGowan (St. Malachy's AC)

### **U-23 Women**

Sara Treacy (Moynalvey / Kilcloon AC)  
Bryony Treston (Dundrum South Dublin AC)  
Maria Walsh (Dundrum South Dublin AC)  
Roseanne Galligan (Newbridge AC)  
Breffni Twohig (Dundrum South Dublin AC)  
Laura Huet (Dundrum South Dublin AC)  
1<sup>st</sup> Reserve – Frances Nic Reamoinn (Clonliffe Harriers AC)  
2<sup>nd</sup> Reserve – Becky Woods (Clonliffe Harriers AC)

### **Junior Men**

Michael McKillop (St. Malachy's AC)  
Liam Tremble (Metro / St. Brigid's AC)  
Ryan Creech (Leevale AC)  
Emmett Jennings (Dundrum South Dublin AC)  
Noel Collins (Omagh Harriers AC)  
Ian Ward (Finn Valley AC)  
1<sup>st</sup> Reserve - John Travers (Donore Harriers AC)  
2<sup>nd</sup> Reserve – Cian O'Reilly (Annalee AC)

### **Junior Women**

Ciara Mageean (Lisburn AC)  
Laura Shaughnessy (Loughrea AC)  
Emma Mitchell (Banbridge AC)  
Mary Mulhare (North Laois AC)  
Eimear Black (Ballymena & Antrim AC)

Charlotte Ffrench-O'Carroll (Dundrum South Dublin AC)

1<sup>st</sup> Reserve – Tekea Gebrezgi (Celtic DCH AC)

2<sup>nd</sup> Reserve – Deirdre Doyle (Tinryland AC)

**Ends**

**For further information:**

Declan Lee – O'Herlihy Communications – 01 660 2744 / 087 695 7451

Frank Greally – Athletics Ireland – 087 256 9690