

The Kerry Athletics annual awards night ceremony was held in the Listowel Arms Hotel on Saturday 11th April. There was a great turn out and Weeshie Fogarty from Kerry Radio was on hand to present the awards. In addition to club and county presentations there were two very special awards made on the night. The Hall of Fame award was made to Donal Crowley, Tralee Harriers and formerly St Johns AC who retired from athletics two years ago after 45 years of involvement in competition. He was one of Kerry's greatest and most versatile athletes and made a huge contribution to Kerry, Munster and National athletics over six decades. Donal commenced his athletics career as a 19 year old when he won three races at the County Novice Track and Field Championships in Scartaglen in 1968. He quickly progressed to intermediate and then senior competition. An all round athlete he competed at every distance from 60m to 10 miles and also in long jump, high jump and shot, winning hundreds of trophies and medals at County, Provincial and National level. He also wore the Kerry singlet on numerous occasions with great pride.

The Kerry Senior and Intermediate Ladies Teams were honoured for their outstanding achievements in the 2014 cross country season which started with their second place finish behind Dublin in the AAI GloHealth National Cross Country Final held in Dundalk on November 2014. The nine strong ladies team was drawn from six athletic clubs and members were Niamh Clifford (Star of the Laune), Grace Lynch (Iveragh), AnnaMeria Costello (Gneeveguilla), Maria McCarthy (Farranfore Maine Valley), Karina Teahan (St Finbarr's), Caitriona Barry (Farranfore Maine Valley), Shona Heaslip (An Ríocht), Laura Crowe (An Ríocht) and Niamh O'Sullivan (An Ríocht) who expertly trained the team. Following on from their success, Laura Crowe and Shona Heaslip made the Irish teams for the European Cross Country Championships in Somokov, Bulgaria. Some of the Kerry Ladies team were back in action at the AAI GloHealth National Novice Cross Country Championships held in Santry in early December where they were second overall. In the Munster Masters, held in December, Maria McCarthy won the race, leading the team to gold. At the Munster Senior 8000m race held in Waterford in January 2015, the Kerry ladies took all three podium positions; Shona Heaslip 1st, Maria McCarthy 2nd and Niamh O'Sullivan 3rd, as well as team gold. Finally, in February this year the Kerry Ladies competed in the National Intermediate Cross Country race held in Tuam, County Galway. The ladies gave it their all and in doing so earned gold medals for the county.

Club awards are an important element of the event, giving clubs a chance to congratulate athletes for their achievements and hard work throughout the year. Club award winners were: An Ríocht, Katelyn Reid and Séan Horan; Farranfore Maine Valley, Rossa Foley and Robert Campbell; Gneeveguilla, Gary Cronin and Matthew Collins; Iveragh, Liam O'Connell and Grace Lynch; Kenmare, Christine McCarthy and Gary Randles; Lios Tuathail, Aoife Mahony and Rachel Moriarty; St Brendan's, Lauren O'Grady and Darragh Courtney; Spa Muckcross, Hollie Spellman and Diarmuid Griffin; Star of the Laune, Patrick Galvin and Fiachra Clifford; Tralee Harriers, Aoife O'Carroll and Jason Roche.

County Track and Field awards went to Denis Finnegan (An Ríocht) Senior Men, Darragh Browne (Lios Tauthail) Junior Men; Adam King (Iveragh) Juvenile Men;

Patsy O'Connor (Tralee Harriers) Masters Men; Clare Fitzgerald (Tralee Harriers) Senior Women; Anette O'Brien (Gneeveguilla) Masters Women; Kayleigh Cronin (Farranfore Maine Valley) Junior Women and Fiona Doyle (Star of the Laune) Juvenile Women. The Special Merit Award went to Sinead O'Connor (Tralee Harriers).

There were three International Awards presented to athletes who had represented county and country on the international stage. They were Shona Heaslip (An Ríocht) who represented Ireland in the U23 cross country championships in Bulgaria, Jason Foley (Lios Tuathail) for his second place finish in the 110mH at the Celtic International games and Aoife Doyle (Star of the Laune) who among her many achievements in 2014 represented Ireland at the Tailteann games where she won gold in the discus.

Three County Cross Country awards went to An Ríocht athletes – Tim O'Connor, Senior Men, Brendan O'Connor, Junior Men and Laura Crowe, Senior Women. Gneeveguilla athletes Francis Cronin and Robert Purcell were awarded the Juvenile Men and Masters Men trophies respectively. Maria McCarthy (Farranfore Maine Valley) was a very worthy winner of the Masters Women award and Kenmare athletes Laura Hallissey, Junior Women and Rhona Randles, Juvenile Women picked up the last two cross country awards.