

ATHLETICS

RUNNING SHORTS

READY BIDS FOR BALLYFIN: Tullamore's Liam Ly, Ryan McDermott of Dromore and Sean Tobin from Clonwill lead the men's race entry at the AB Travel Ballyfin Junior in Emo Court, Co Laois on October 8. Lady, third in the first running of the event in 2009 and second last year, has since won an U19 All-Ireland cross-country title the Celtic junior international. Former winner and last year's runner-up Mary Mulhare leads the women's entry.

TRIES ALREADY FOR BELFAST: Entries are already coming in for next year's 31st Deep RiverRock Belfast City Marathon on May 7. Last year, 20,000 people took part in the marathon, the marathon relay and associated events. Entry fee is £33 or £80 for relay teams at www.belfastcitymarathon.com.

-OLYMPIANS AT BALLYHAUNIS: Former Olympian Noel Berkeley has become a Cork BHAA race regular last weekend made a worthwhile trip to Connacht, where he ran the Ballyhaunis 8km. Another ex-Olympian in action was Cliffliffe's Jerry Kiernan who finished third over 50 behind Domoan and Billy Gallagher. Mary Gleeson was first woman.

MARREY ENJOYS ADVENTURE: A total of 363 runners took part in the Wicklow Adventure Race based in Powerscourt. Winner of the long 65km was Padraig Marrey in 3 hours 9 minutes. Emma Donlon was first woman in 3.40. Eanna Cunnane and Linda Haug were the shorter 35km race winners.

TO THE DISTANCE: Long-distance junkies are spoiled for choice this weekend, with the Cork to Cobh 15-mile, the Lone Three-Quarter Marathon and the Causeway Coast Marathon and Half Marathon in Co Antrim. In Athlone, pacemakers are offered in four time categories, as well as split times for the shorter- and half-marathon. Late entries at €49 are available.

MCALISTER TRIUMPHS: Joe McAlister of St. Mary's led home 728 finishers at the Bangor 10km, finishing in 13. Kerry Harty was eighth overall and first woman, one place ahead of Gladys Ganiel O'Neill. Lizzie Lee beat Claire Gibbons and Carthy to win the Cork Women's Mini Marathon.

SWEENEY SURGES IN RATHFARNHAM

BETWEEN the perfect weather conditions, a record entry and a commanding victory for Joe Sweeney, the organisers of last Sunday's Rathfarnham 5km had plenty to smile about.

Over 800 had entered the race and 721 finished – a record for this race, first held in 1998 when 523 finished.

Many were repeat customers using the race either as a test of their fitness after the long summer months or as a fast leg-spinner on the roads before the slog of cross-country.

Up front, Sweeney (pictured), second in 2010 behind Mark Fagan, was the clear favourite, and he pushed the pace from the start. Behind him Sean Hehir of host club Rathfarnham

WSAF, the rejuvenated Tommy Evans of Gowran and Donore's John Travers were doing their best to keep in touch.

There was no catching the flying Dundrum South Dublin man, however, and he came home comfortably in 14 minutes 18 seconds – slightly slower than a year earlier.

Sean Hehir, who is preparing for the cross-country season and a spring marathon, was happy enough to finish second, as was Evans in third place. John Travers, third last year, had to be content with fifth this time after he was edged out by the veteran Shane

Healy, who

ON YOUR MARKS

WITH LINDIE NAUGHTON



made the 1500m semi-finals at the 1996 Olympics, has a new goal. At the age of 42, he wants to become the first man over 40 to run a sub-four minute mile outdoors.

Eamonn Coghlan remains the only man over 40 to have achieved this feat indoors.

BATTLING

Making it a DSD double when she won the women's race was the newly married Aoife Culhane, formerly Byrne.

She finished in 16:54 and

was followed soon after by the Raheny quartet of Annette Kealy, who was also first over 40, Aoife Talty, Lorraine Manning and Orla O'Mahoney.

For Manning, it was only her second race after a summer spent battling injury.

Raheny also took the junior prizes, with Kevin Dooney 10th overall and Chloe Doran the first junior woman.

Finishing first over 50 was Liffey Valley's Tom O'Connor.

In the inaugural race 14 years ago, O'Connor finished fourth.

