

Mick Clohissey (Raheny Shamrock) winds up the pace for this breakout group

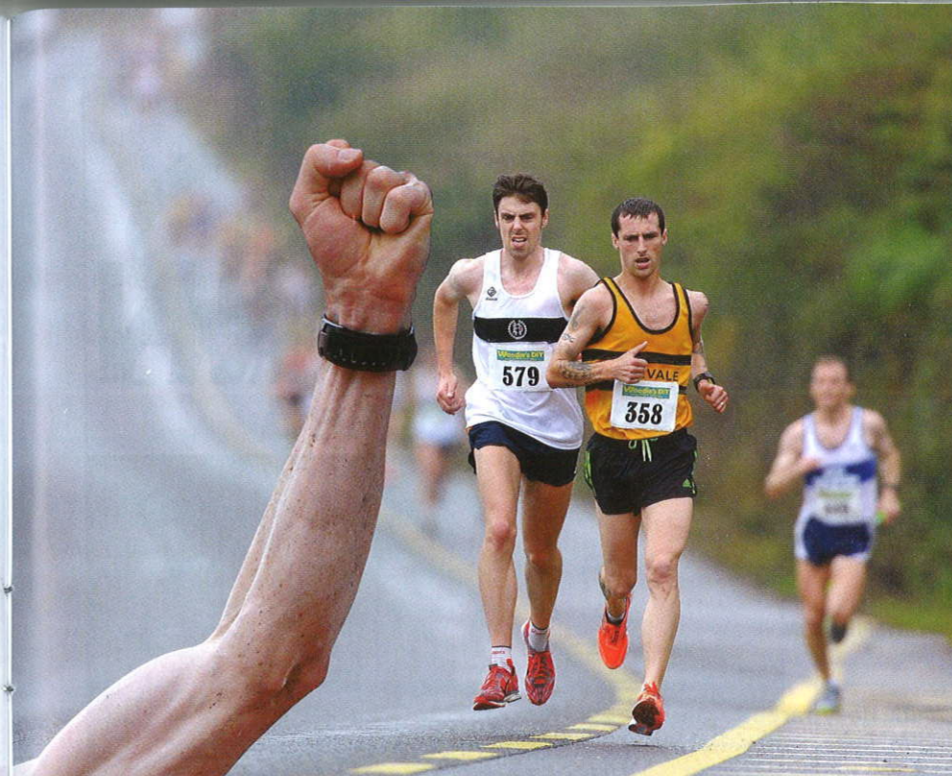


Michael Burke (137 and John Brennan (130) both from Waterford AC in action in the Half Marathon Challenge event run in tandem with the National Half Marathon Championships



Ava Hutchinson (DSD) won the Women's National Half Marathon title when she clocked 74:17 in her first race over this distance

Sean Hehir (Rathfarnham WSAF) celebrates winning the Men's title in 65:24



Chris Harrington (Leevale AC, wearing 358) and Ken Nugent (Donore Harriers AC) up the ante on this uphill stretch of the National Half Marathon race in Waterford



Mark Ryan's 8th place helped secure the team title for Rathfarnham WSAF

HEHIR LAYS DOWN A MARKER

Sean Hehir led home a record entry of over 800 runners in the Woodie's DIY National Half Marathon Championship event in Waterford

REPORT: FRANK GREALLY PHOTOS: MATT BROWNE SPORTSFILE.COM

SEAN HEHIR proved his versatility when he coasted to a comfortable victory in the Woodie's DIY Half Marathon Challenge and National Championships in Waterford.

The Rathfarnham WSAF athlete made his winning break close to the eight miles mark and he ran on strongly to win his first national road championship in 65:24. Brian Maher of Kilkenny City Harriers finished second in 66:40 and Alan O'Shea from Bantry AC placed third in 66:50.

The victory marked a return to form for the Clare native Hehir who won the National Intermediate Cross Country title in 2009. Coached by Dick Hooper, the Dublin-based school teacher also led his club to the team title with Barry Minnock and Mark Ryan the other Rathfarnham scoring finishers.

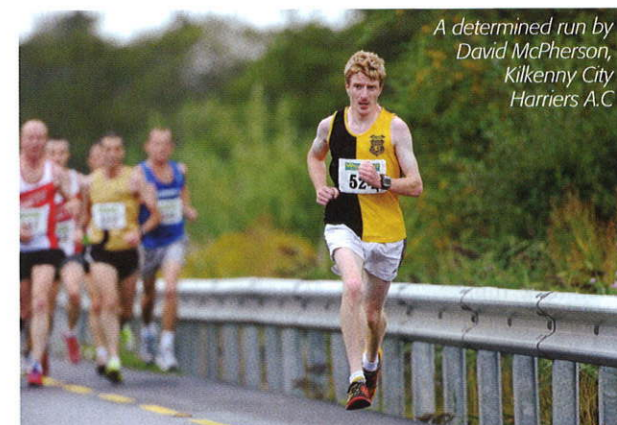
Ava Hutchinson (DSD) won the

Women's national title in her first race over the distance, finishing in 74:17. Gladys Ganiel O'Neill (North Belfast A.C), who led in the early stages, finished second in 75:32 and Julie Turley (Dromore AC) placed third in 78:02.

The DSD runner, who is also National Cross Country champion, expects to run in the National Lottery Dublin Marathon in October.

The Raheny Shamrock AC team of Eilish Kelly, Annette Kealy and Fiona Roche won the women's team title.

There was a great mix of club singlets visible in this National Championship event, hosted by Waterford Athletic Club, which attracted a record entry of over 800 runners. And event sponsor Woodie's DIY were also well represented as Marketing Manager Peter Dolan and his colleague Brian O'Neill both competed.



A determined run by David McPherson, Kilkenny City Harriers A.C



Mary Jennings (Waterford AC)