

GazetteSport

FastSport



Olympian Jennings launches local 5k

THIS year's Rathfarnham 5k Run in aid of St Luke's Hospital, Rathgar was launched recently in Bushy Park by Olympic-bound Caitriona Jennings and the Rathfarnham Ladies team.

Club member Jennings, pictured, has been selected for the marathon at the London Games on August 5 and has been a regular entrant in the race in the past.

Entries are now open at www.athleticsrathfarnham.ie. The race is on Sunday, September 23 around the streets of Rathfarnham and Terenure and is being sponsored by Energie Fitness Gym in Rathfarnham.

More than 1,000 people are expected for this run and fun runners and walkers are welcome.

The first 800 finishers will receive a high quality technical training top and there will be a goody bag for all.

All this for just €20, so enter today and set your 5k personal best time at Rathfarnham.

The club's coaching manager Adam Jones has devised an 11-week training programme for this year's run.

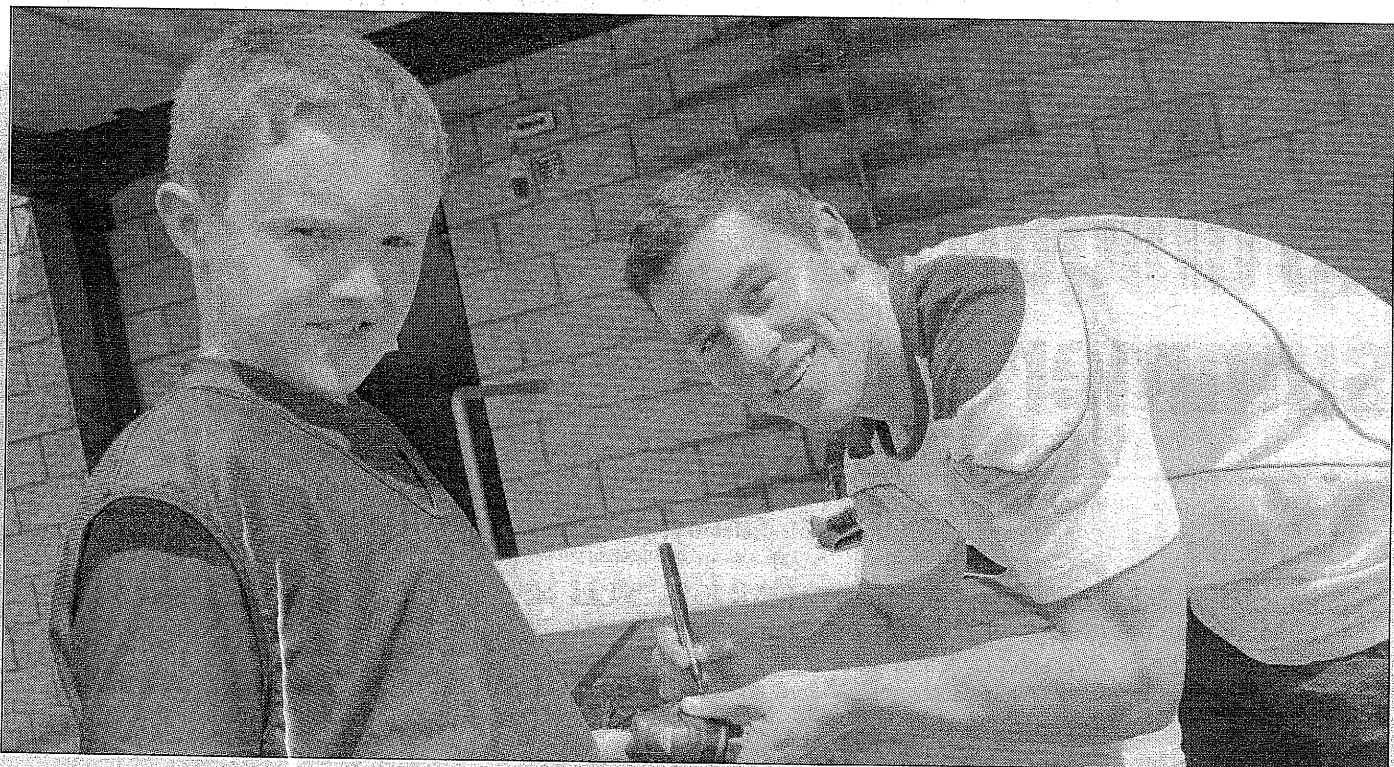
Following the programme will ensure participants get the most out of the experience and are in the best possible shape at the start line.

The schedules are divided into three phases of training: conditioning/preparation, consolidation and tapering/finishing.

The first four-week phase, focusing on preparation and conditioning, is now available in the Rathfarnham AC website.

Meanwhile, the club produced a number of good results at the recent Woodies national senior track and field championships, Paul Stephenson ran 33.09 to come 12th in the 10,000m final, while Johnathan Hughes ran 35.29. Louis McCarthy and Paul Fleming ran in the second heat of the 1,500m. On day two, Kevin Donagher ran 16.38 in the 5,000m.

RUGBY: YOUNG GUN HUNGRY AFTER HEINEKEN CUP FINAL CAMEO



Former De La Salle Palmerston player John Cooney signs autographs at Coolmine RFC this week Picture: Ian Fleming

Cooney eyes 'big year'

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JOHN Cooney is lining up "a big year" in blue this season as Leinster start their initial preparations for the 2012/13 season, with a memorable close to the last season fresh in the mind.

He was the unlikely recipient of a Heineken Cup medal a couple of months ago in Twickenham, coming into the match day squad just an hour before the final got under way and making his debut with six minutes left on the clock.

During that time, the 22-year-old scrum-half had enough time to play his part in Heineke van der Merwe's try and offer a glimpse of what he can offer next term.

His entry to the game was a surprise to many,

not just to his friends but to the player himself.

"A few of my mates were at the game and they saw me warm-up and were wondering 'what's going on there?'" It was pretty special," he told GazetteSport at Coolmine RFC where he was meeting some of the stars of the future at a Leinster Rugby summer camp.

Despite waiting on tenterhooks for much of the week, Cooney said he was confident he could do a job if called upon.

"It was a mad week in general. I started running on the wing with the second team on the Monday.

"Both scrum halves got niggles so I had to do all the first team trainings for the week.

Isaac Boss said he felt alright on the Saturday but I was told if he couldn't kick properly, I'd be in [for the final].

"It was only five minutes before the proper warm-up, I was told I was in. That was about an hour or 50 minutes before the game. I had been prepared anyway. I was lucky that I'd prepared the moves so I felt quite confident. I was told to be ready.

Nerves

"I was more nervous before the game but, when I came on, we were 20 points up. I was happy to be involved in making a try. I got a few nice touches and was nearly in another time but [Gordon] D'Arcy dropped the ball but that happens."

Despite reported

interest from Scotland, the former De La Salle Palmerston youth player and Irish U-20s regular agreed an extension to his contract in early May, prior to the final, with the province.

Those suggestions came as a result of his father's heritage as a Blantyre man but he says Leinster and Ireland will always come first.

"I can play for Scotland if I wanted to but I want to see how things go here first. It's always a good fall-back option but definitely not at the moment.

"This will hopefully be a big year [with Leinster]. With the experience of Isaac Boss and Eoin Reddan, you always pick up a good few pointers off them. They're real-

ly approachable and always helpful."

His emotional ties also stay close to his heart, currently with Lansdowne, but also with DLSP.

"I started there at U-16s in fourth year because I wasn't playing senior cup so I'd go down on Saturdays and Sundays. We did pretty well; I think we finished second in our league and I enjoyed it.

"My brother Francis played up there. He's finished up now but he plays the odd time at J1 and says he runs the show. With him, I put one of my U-20 jerseys up there recently.

"It's nice to still have that connection. It's a good club and a lot of young Gonzaga [his alma mater] guys going up there now."

LOCAL SPORT MATTERS

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