

League wins for Adele, Ciaran and Colm at Ballon

The 34th Annual St. Abban's 4 County League got off to a good start on a flat course in ideal weather conditions at Ballon on Sunday last. Ciaran Phelan led home the "John Brophy" Youths 2 mile event after moving to the head of the field from early on. He was chased all the way by Brian Kelly and Eamon O'Connor who had a great duel for 2 laps, but then Brian got away and despite a mighty effort to haul back the leader, Phelan held out for an impressive victory. O'Connor had the satisfaction of leading his team to victory.

In the Glanbia Ladies 2 mile stage, last years winner, Adele Walsh, began where she left off in 2007 and went to the front from the start and finished well clear of Suzanne Donovan who incidentally also finished 2nd last year. Niamh Richardson, by finishing 3rd made it a clean sweep of the top awards for Kilkenny. An impressive run from Colette English in 4th prevented a complete land slide for the Black & Amber as she was followed home by Ciara Martin and Caoimhe Foley who helped the 'Harriers to the team contest ahead of O' Tooles.

National O/40 champion Colm Burke allowed the field to settle in the Glanbia Men's 4 mile event before he hit the front, but from then on there was no stopping the Barrowhouse man as he glided on top of the ground in his bear feet to a clear cut victory. Behind him there was a mighty battle all through between Tony Reilly and Tommy McAlwaine, with Tony getting clear over the final circuit. "Youthful" Tommy Payne, by finishing 4th after braking clear in the closing stages, also helped defending champions Tinryland to a slender lead in the team contest ahead of Portlaoise and S.B.R.

John Brophy Youth's 2 Mile: (1) C. Phelan (Agherviller)10.59, (2) B. Kelly (St. Abban's) 11.04, (3) E. O' Connor (KCH.) 11.19, (4) C. Rochford (St. Senan's) 11.29.

Teams: (1) KCH. 21pts. (2) St. Abban's 33pts. (3) Ballyfin 54pts.

Glanbia Ladies 2 Mile: (1) A. Walsh (St Senan's)12.45, (2) S. Donovan (Agherviller) 13.03, (3) N. Richardson (KCH.) 13.10. (4) C. English (St. Abban's) 13.31, (5) Ciara Martin (KCH.) 13.43, (6) C. Foley (KCH.) 14.05.

Teams: (1) KCH. 30pts, (2) S.L.O.T. 47pts. (3) St. Abban's 50pts. (4) St. Senan's 68pts, (5) Portlaoise 79pts.

Glanbia Mens 4 Mile:

"A"(1) C. Burke (St. Abban's) 21.28, (2) T. Reilly (Portlaoise) 21.49, (3) T. McAlwaine (SBR.) 21.57, (4) T. Payne (Tinryland) 22.17, (5) D. Farrell (Tinryland) 22.34, (6) C. Fitzpatrick (Ballyfin) 22.52.

Teams: (1) Tinryland 40pts, (2) Portlaoise 45pts, (3) SBR. 47pts. (4) St. Abban's 125 pts.

"B" (1) D. Farrell (Gowran) 19th. (2) D. Conroy (Ballyfin) 25th, (3) N. Lyons (Gowran) 27th, (4) N. Devery (Ballyfin) 30th.

Teams : (1) Ballyfin 95pts, (2) Gowran 118pts. (3) St. Joseph's 163pts.

"C" (1) Mick Dore (KCH) 6th, (2) C. Butler (St. Senan's) 8th, (3) M. Finlay (Portlaoise) 14th. (4) J. Connolly (Thomastown) 17th.

Teams: (1) St. Senan's 77pts. (2) Portlaoise 110pts. (3) St. Abban's 190pts, (4) Gowran 193pts, (5) SBR. 196pts.

Vets Teams: (1) Tinryland 35pts, (2) Portlaoise 45pts. (3) St. Senan's 69pts. (4) St. Abban's 87pts, (5) Gowran 105pts, (6) SBR. 113pts.

Before the men's race a minutes silence was observed for the late Michael Power of the St. Joseph's Club (whose sons Michael and Seamus have competed in the league for many years) and also for the late Jim English (whose daughter Noeleen is present secretary of the Ballon/Rathoe Athletic club).

Next stage of League at Ferns on Sunday March 30th at 1.30pm.