

All-Ireland Course

The all-Ireland club cross country championships take place this year in Morton Stadium on February 23rd and the course, a new one, compared with the last few years, has been the brain-child of the Clonliffe Sub Committee especially formed for this occasion by Johnny O'Leary and with help of such people like Lar O'Byrne, Paddy Marley, Brian Brewer, Tommy Griffin and Maurice Ahern.

The Dublin Cross Country Championships were held over this exciting course on Dec. 1st, 1985, and it was very successful for the sub-committee and the Dublin County Board. It is a tough and very fast course in the surrounds of Santry Demense. The last time the all-Ireland senior championships were held in Santry was in the 60's under A.A.U. rules and around the time Donore were dominant in the team awards and Avondale were their great rivals, before B.L.E. was founded.

THE COURSE

The course is situated at the back of Morton Stadium in two fields as seen on plan. The two

fields top and bottom, divide the course up into two sections. The bottom field which many athletes will know well as part of the old course and full of the abundance of woodland and everything to suit a real cross country course. The top field is quite flat and fast and it will test the athletes after coming from the bottom field which has some testing hills to tire the legs quickly.

The start of all the races is situated opposite Trinity training grounds where some of the dressing accommodation will be. When the athletes start off in the mens junior, senior and the senior ladies', they do a small lap which is 760m long before coming around to the start again. When they reach the start they have 844 meters before they come to a right turn, which takes them into a valley and down by the old walls of Santry Mansion and the stables. There is good running in the stables walls where the going becomes fair. There is a drop of over 5 metres (15 feet) over 90 metres and a rise of 5 metres again over a shorter distance of

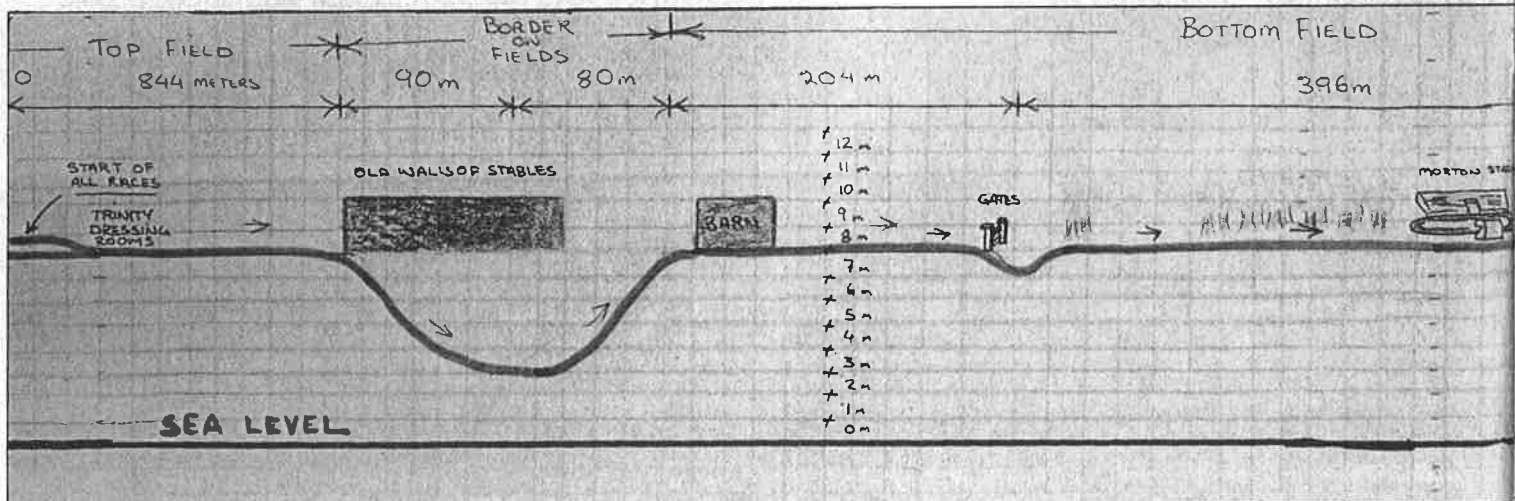
80 metres. This is the first really tough hill on the first of 5 big laps for the senior men, 2 laps for the ladies' and 3 laps for the junior men. All these races include one small lap per race at the beginning.

After reaching the top of the valley hill, the athletes will take a large 'U' bend before going through a part of Santry's History, the gates of Santry's Mansion, which has a very small dip of 1 metre over 5 metres. The going here is very good under foot and good fast running.

For the next 600m the course will take you by the back of Morton Stadium where the going is fair. Just as you come to the end of the Stadium, there is a slope down of 6 metres (nearly 20feet) over 147 metres. The ground is very good along this stretch where many athletes will try to make a break away from a group. There is 84 metres before rising slightly and heading into the upper field.

Here is where the strength of athletes will be tested. A climb of 6 metres over 300m and 3 different levels. The first level is

ALL-IRELAND CROSSCOUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS At Morton Stadium on Sunday, 23rd February 1986



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over 153 metres and a rise of 2 metres. Not really demanding but it would take its toll when you have to run the next 2 levels together over 156m and 4 metres of a rise. The going is good to fair here and it will take strength to tackle it. After this, you are again back on to the top field and 843 metres before reaching the start again. The ground is really good on the top field and it will be fast and will make interesting running.

The finish is situated as you come out of the bottom field into the top field. As you come out through the gates on the last lap you were off to the right and run to the finish. The distance of the mens senior race is 12,000m, 5 Big Laps and 1 small lap. The Junior Mens is 7,500m, 3 big laps with one small and the senior ladies is over 3,000m, 2 big laps and one small.

All in all it should be very interesting on the day and with Clonliffe Harriers promoting it in their centenary year it will be in capable hands. Hers to February 23rd. Hope to see you all there and have a good run.

Ken Harris

PROMOTED BY
CLONLIFFE HARRIERS

