

# Noel Harvey — Clonliffe Harriers Cross Country Champion 1986

Talking to Ken Harris

**Q:** Good run on Sunday.

**A:** Quite pleased.

**Q:** What was the atmosphere like?

**A:** Every supporter I think was a Clonliffe Harrier, and it was extra special to win it in our Centenary Year and with all the hard work which Johnny O'Leary, his committee and the Clonliffe Committee put into it.

**Q:** From the very start of the race you were up in a group of seven including Mulligan, Dooney, Woods, Taylor and Deegan, How did the race go for you from the very start till you finished in triumph?

**A:** The ground made it very, very difficult for a lot of people found it treacherous as well with people falling. So a group over the first 3 or 4 miles started to break down into the final 4, but until it broke down it was most difficult.

**Q:** A lot of people were surprised that you had a kick at the finish because those in there (the fab. 4) hadn't got any real kick. Were you surprised yourself?

**A:** I was surprised because I won with ease on the kick, but I taught John Woods was the best kicker being a track man.

**Q:** Where was the decisive move made on the last lap?

**A:** It was as we came in sight of the finish. The thing most that I remembered was seeing the finishing line. The crowd was fantastic to me.

**Q:** How did you feel during the race?

**A:** I felt very tired. The ground took a lot out of my legs and I found it most difficult. At mostly all stages I was feeling bad and I was dropping back all the time. With a half mile to go, I figured I had a chance but waited.

**Q:** Did you feel at any time in the race that you were going to win?

**A:** No, not really. The lead changed constantly. Each one of us in the group tried to back away without succeeding. In the end we were bunched together.

**Q:** It was all hell for leather on the last 200m?

**A:** It was. The crowd were screaming and that got me going. I loved it.

**Q:** When you got to the front you expected someone to pass you?



A happy champion.

**A:** When I got to the front, I realised I was going to win. It was only in the last 50m that I was sure I won it and I looked around for security.

**Q:** Straight after you finished, you brushed away your own victory and were more concerned about Clonliffe's team and how they were doing.

**A:** Well, I was delighted that Clonliffe won the team, after all we were beaten last year by Limerick. So it was put up to us again this year and we came back stronger than ever. It was unfortunate that Gerry Kiernan missed out through twisting his ankle the day before. But at the same time we had Dave Taylor.

**Q:** Dermot Redmond and Eugene Curran both had fantastic runs to help the team along?

**A:** There is certainly a lot to be said for the two lads. They gave everything.

**Q:** The injury which you had before Christmas. Did it effect you at all?

**A:** I was most unfortunate towards the end of the road season. In injured my hamstring and I spent the next 7 weeks right up to December when I got married to Sandra, nursing it, and got back into training very slowly. I got back with the Eastern Regions in Trim. I noticed in the *Marathon Magazine* that it was mentioned as a shock of the race when I finished ninth. Trim is history. I ran in the Liffey Valleys Relays and didn't run too well there. But everything was leading towards the National Senior.

**Q:** How is the leg now?

**A:** Pretty good. I got some treatment for it. I did the damage by not exercising and stretching and I realise my mistake. **I got injured because I was not stretching and exercising.**

**Q:** Finally. The World Cross Country. Are you looking forward to it?

**A:** Yes. Very much so. It will be a very difficult race and very, very fast. The team will do well because it is very strong.

The best of luck Noel.  
Thanks Ken.



On the victory stage with new Minister for Sport, Sean Barrett T.D.