

Clonliffe Harriers 134th Annual General Meeting

Ladies Captain's Report



At a committee meeting on 2nd November 2021, Jenny Johnston and Laura Tuite were co-opted by the club's committee to the positions of Acting Ladies Captain and Vice- Captain.

This report summarises the activity of the ladies' section of Clonliffe Harriers AC during the year 2021 up to 26th April 2022 across Outdoor Track & Field, Cross country, Road Racing and Indoor competitions.

Leading on from the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, the period from January to May 2021 was an incredibly tough time for all. Morton stadium was effectively closed (bar elite activities) from 1st January to 27th April 2021 when U9s to U18s were able to resume training. Training for all athletes resumed on Tuesday May 11th, with competition following shortly after and thankfully we haven't looked back since. The resilience and determination shown by all junior, senior and master ladies in the weeks and months spent training alone has truly reaped rewards and it is a credit to all and a privilege to report on. Congratulation on your well earned success.

Jenny Johnston (Acting Ladies Captain)
26th April 2022

Outdoor Track & Field

On the 29th May a very enthusiastic quartet of ladies travelled to the Mary Peters Track for the **Belfast Miler Meet**. The first race since summer 2020 proved a very successful venture, with Laura Tuite running a fantastic 12 second PB of 4.44.98 in the 1500 B race. In the 800 C race Jenny Johnston took 5 seconds of her PB in 2.19.57 for 2nd place. Solid performances by Alannah Cooley and Naoise Cullen also in the 800 C rounded off a great day and start to the season.

In the **National Senior Track and Field** held in Morton stadium on 25th June, Greta Streimikyte ran 4.33.59 in the 1500 final. In the **National Track & Field U/23** Sadhbh Byrne took silver in the 3000m Steeple chase.

Another quartet of middle distance athletes travelled to IT Carlow for the **Leinster Senior & Masters championships** held on 3rd and 4th July. Laura Tuite, Laura Power and Clodagh Galvin all raced the 1500. Jenny Johnston competed over both days and took W35 800 silver and 1500 bronze. Frances Mansfield won W75 Hammer gold.

The **Dublin Graded Series** races were held in Tallaght throughout the summer. These were mostly attended by middle distance athletes and were a welcome opportunity to race and track progress.

On 31st July Laura Tuite travelled solo to the **Northern Ireland Championships** taking 3rd in the 1500 B race (4.49.42).

At the **AAI Summer Games** on 25th July at IT Carlow, Caoimhe Morris took bronze in her comeback Hammer (39.23)



The **National Track and Field League** final was held in Tullamore on 15th August as a one-day competition. It was a challenge fielding a team as many were taking their first opportunity of a summer holiday abroad since 2019. Nevertheless it was a positive day for the club as a small women's team worked hard to gain valuable points with some competing in multiple and unfamiliar events. Emma Mitchell and Caoimhe Morris took wins in the 3000 and hammer respectively and there were 3rd places for Jenny Johnston, 800 and Laura Tuite, 1500. Newbie Aisling Killilea took 5th place in the 1500m walk, her debut race in this discipline. Lauren Carr ran the 200, took part in the high jump and a leg of the 4 x 400 and likewise Jenny Johnston ran the 800, threw the weight for distance and swiftly moved on to run a leg of the 4 x 400. Natalia Gil, Sally Sumola, Leah Bergin, Alannah Cooley and Denise Byrne all chipped into the cause also, with the team finishing a commendable 6th on the day.

Greta Streimikyte qualified for her second successive **Paralympic** final finishing fifth in the T13 1500 in Tokyo on 28th August 2021 with a time of in 4:34.82. Earlier in the summer Greta won **European** 1500 T 13 para gold in Poland.

The **National Masters Track & Field** were held on 5th September at Morton Stadium. Newly minted member Edel Maguire showed her class with wins in both the W60 400 and High Jump, setting National W60 records in both of 1:11.21 and 1.30m. Frances Mansfield continued her medal haul with wins in the W75 Hammer and Discus. Jenny Johnston winning W35 Javelin and bronze 800.

The **2021 Club Championship** races were well supported across all distances from 100m to 10,000m on the track at Morton stadium and also the 10 mile championship in Malahide castle. The sprinters mixed it up well; with young Sally Sumola taking the 100m title, Laura Carr taking the spoils for the 200 and Leah Bergin taking the 400 title. The middle distance races across 800, 1500, 1 mile and 5000 included a good mix of junior, senior and master ladies. Laura Tuite proved hard to beat over 1500m and 1 mile also notching up a fine win in the 5000 with a PB of 18.05. Jenny Johnston took the 800m title for a 2nd year. On September 23rd Clodagh Moriarty won the 10,000m women's club championship title and Mary Ketterer won the final 10 mile club championship title held in Malahide on October 9th.

On October 21st Vanessa Fenton was fastest woman in the **4 mile Walker cup** at Morton stadium.

The **Grand Prix** returned on 1st April 2022 with the Frank White 5 mile and will continue throughout the summer.

At the **IUAA Championships** in Carlow on 8th/9th April 2022 new member Grace Casey, DCU won the Javelin with 39.18m.



Cross country

Senior & Master ladies came out in force for the **Dublin Novice Cross Country** held in Tymon Park on October 10th. In total 16 Clonliffe ladies toed the line for the first Cross Country race of the season and the first since Feb 2020! Top performances by Laura Power 2nd, Julie Larkin 9th, Kate Hawkshaw 12th and Ciara Peelo in 15th secured an excellent silver for the scoring team.

The **Dublin Senior Cross Country** championships were held on October 31st at Trinity Sports grounds. An encouraging team of 8 Junior women were rewarded with a fine silver, the scoring 4 led by Sarah Bateson 5th, Naoise Cullen 11th, Abbie Sheehy 13th and Aimee Daly 15th. The Senior women fielded a team of 10, placing 4th led home by Laura Power 16th, Ailish Malone 27th, Kate Hawkshaw 28th and Laura Tuite 30th.

On the 7th November, only 7 days after the Dublin Senior Cross country, the Senior women enjoyed well-earned success by winning the **Leinster Cross Country** title in the hilly delights of Avondale House Park in Co. Wicklow. Fantastic runs from Laura Power 4th, Laura Tuite 19th, Sarah Bateson 22nd and Kate Hawkshaw 25th secured the Leinster Cross Country title. Jenny Johnston, Sarah Hawkshaw and Megan O'Keefe completed the strong team showing. Laura Power also took Inter County gold with Dublin and Sarah Bateson was 4th U/23.

The **National Senior Cross Country** held at Santry Park on 21st November was fielded by a Junior (U20), incorporating U18s team and a Senior ladies team. The Junior (U20) team placed a very respectable 6th over a course of 4k. The team comprised Sarah Bateson, Grace Twomey, Lara Gallagher U18, Abbie Sheehy, Naoise Cullen U18, Aimee Daly U18 and Amy Sheehy U18. The Senior ladies team placed 8th over the 8k course. The team comprising Ailish Malone, Kate Hawkshaw, Laura Tuite, Meghan O'Keefe, Jenny Johnston, Sarah Hawkshaw, Alannah Cooley and Clodagh Galvin.

Adding to the medal collection on 28th November, the Senior ladies took team silver in the **Dublin Intermediate Cross Country** championships in Tymon Park North. This was an especially pleasing result that showed some depth to the squad as some of the core team weren't eligible to compete. Kate Hawkshaw ran a superb race coming through to finish an excellent 5th and Jenny Johnston, Sarah Hawkshaw and Meghan O'Keefe completing the scoring team. Eleven Clonliffe ladies raced in total.

On the 5th December another sterling effort was made at the **National Novice & Uneven Age Juveniles Cross Country** in Gowran, Co Kilkenny. The Senior ladies just missing out on bronze by the tiniest of margins. It was heartbreakingly close for a squad that worked so hard together for the months prior. 15 Harriers toed the line, led home by Laura Power, 12th, Laura Tuite 29th, Kate Hawkshaw 30th, Jenny Johnston 44th, the team finished fourth a single point behind bronze medal team DCH. The U/19 girls due to withdrawals were down to the bare minimum of three and Naoise Cullen, Lara Gallagher and Katie Halpin put in a great effort to place 5th team.



The much anticipated **Dublin Masters Cross Country** was held on 9th January 2022 in St. Anne's Park, Raheny. We had a bumper ladies entry, with Clonliffe ladies fielding three O35 teams and one O50 team. The O35s securing team silver courtesy of Jenny Johnston 13th, Ailish Malone 14th and Ciara Peelo 15th and a great sprint down the home straight by Siobhan Devaney finishing in 19th. W50 also securing team silver as a result of great performances from Aimee Ahern, Edel Maguire, Aine McCann and Anne Lyons. Individually Ailish Malone won bronze W35 category and Edel Maguire won gold in the W60 category.

On 15th January 2022 a well-supported **Clonliffe Club Cross Country Championships** took place in Santry Park. Kate Hawkshaw won the new Clonliffe Women's Cross Country Champion Cup, closely followed by Laura Tuite and Jenny Johnston in 3rd. Naoise Cullen was 1st junior woman, 2nd Hazel Kenny with Lara Gallagher 3rd. Jenny Johnson was the first master woman and was presented with the Fred Connolly Cup.

The final cross country race of the season, the **National Intermediate Cross Country** in Castlelyons, Co. Cork held on 13th February 2022 proved a worthwhile journey for the Senior ladies. Topping off a fantastic season the ladies grabbing national team bronze in the Cork mud. Led home by Laura Power 12th, followed by Jenny Johnston 19th, Sarah Hawkshaw 24th, Sarah Bateson 26th, Laura Tuite 27th and Alannah Cooley 36th. The Masters women's team placed 8th with good runs from Siobhan Devaney, Elaine McLaughlin, Joyce O'Hare, Vanessa Fenton, Emma Harding and Alison O'Sullivan.

Road Racing

Postponed from the usual April date, the **2021 National Road Relays** were held in Raheny on October 3rd. This was an encouraging performance for the club with 2 Senior teams fielded as well as 3 Masters. The Senior teams included 3 Clonliffe Harrier debutants. Fine runs by both teams saw the A team of Jenny Johnston, Laura Power and Laura Tuite finished 7th and the B team of Sarah and Kate Hawkshaw and Julie Larkin 10th. The Master A team of Siobhan Devaney, Joyce O'Hare and Sinead McDermott finished in 5th place, followed in 6th by B team of Emma Byrne, Maura Matthews and Elaine McLaughlin with the C team not far off, Laura Kernan, Mary Ketterer and Aideen O'Connor in 8th.

On October 24th Emma Mitchell was 14th in the **Valencia International Half Marathon** in a time of 72.36.



Mainstream Road Racing made a welcome return during the autumn of 2021 and ladies have raced enthusiastically supporting races throughout the country in distances from 2 mile to half marathon across the country. Some highlights were:

- The **130th Clonliffe 2** was held on 7th November with 65 Clonliffe ladies racing. Michelle Finn was first woman home taking a fine win in a time of 10.03.
- Ciara Peelo won Dublin Novice bronze in the **Dublin Road Novice 5k Championships** held in conjunction with the Tallaght 5K on 14th November, clocking a then PB of 18.44. A few weeks later on 19th December Ciara recorded another PB of 18.30 for 7th lady overall in the **Drogheda & District AC Christmas 5k**.
- At the **Tom Brennan Memorial 5K**, Phoenix Park on 1st January 2022 Sarah Bateson, Megan O’Keeffe and Sarah Hawkshaw took 3rd team.
- At the **Raheny 5 mile** on 30th January 2022 the women’s W40 team of Ailish Malone, Siobhan Devaney and Vanessa Fenton who placed 3rd.
- Emma Mitchell ran the fastest **Park Run 5K** ever by a woman in Ireland on 5th February 2022. A lightning fast 16.20 at the Royal Victoria Park, Belfast. On 13th March Emma was 1st woman in Jimmy’s 10k, Downpatrick, Northern Ireland, clocking a tasty 33.14.
- The **NI 5k Championships** or Queen’s 5k on 7th April 2022 proved a worthwhile journey with the Senior team taking silver. Led home by Emma Mitchell who took individual gold, running a brilliant 16.09. A PB for Laura Tuite of 18.02 and strong runs by Alannah Cooley 18.55 and Sarah Hawkshaw, also in a new PB, 19.01.
- At the **National 10 K Road Championships**, incorporated in the Great Ireland Run on 9th April 2022 Ciara Peelo took an excellent silver W40 (39.50). Solid runs by Siobhan Devaney and Laura Kernan saw the W35 team taking a well-earned bronze.
- On 18th April 2022 and the **Battle of Clontarf** which also double as the Leinster 10 mile, Orla Deignan took W45 silver and Anne Lyons W55 silver.

The **2022 National Road Relays** were held on 24th April 2022. A fantastic total of 6 ladies teams competed across Senior and Masters. Alannah Cooley running the opening leg for the Senior A team, passed to Emma Mitchell who ran a superb 2 mile leg (2nd fastest of the day) to propel the team right into the medal positions, passing onto Laura Tuite. Laura ran an excellent mile of 5.21 but found herself being chased down by an extraordinary sub- 5 minute mile by a UCD athlete, and was overhauled an agonising 20m from the line to place 4th, missing out on bronze by a single second! The B team of Sarah Hawkshaw, Megan O’Keeffe and Marie Howard finishing in 16th position with the C team of Naoise Cullen, Clodagh Galvin and Amy Sheehy 23rd, all putting in very strong performances and gained invaluable experience. In W35, the A team of Jenny Johnston, Ciara Peelo and Siobhan Devaney performed well to finish 7th overall, they were closely followed by the B team of Aisling Andrews, Elaine McLaughlin and Aoife O’Sullivan in 8th position with the C team of Laura Kernan, Ann Lyons and Joyce O’Hare in 10th place.



Indoor

Only elite activity took place during the indoor season of 2021. With the country in a Level 5 lockdown, Athletics Ireland organised an **Elite Micro Meet** at the NIA, Abbotstown on 21st February. Greta Streimikyte ran 4.42.61 in the 1500.

The **National Indoor league** returned in 2022, held over 2 rounds on 9th and 23rd January with the final on 12th February in the NIA Abbotstown. Gutsy performances in both rounds lead to the team qualifying for the final. Maximum points courtesy of Snezana Bechtina in the pole vault, another determined performance in the 400m by Leah Bergin, and consistent performances through-out by Lauren Carr, Greta Streimikyte, Anna Heavey, Alannah Cooley, Edel Maguire and Jenny Johnston secured a really encouraging 4th the place in the final for the team. Edel Maguire even bagged another W60 National record with 3.97m in the Long Jump, an event she hadn't competed in for quite some time! During the earlier rounds Hannah Browne, Sarah Bateston, Natalia Gil and Caoimhe Morris all chipped in.

In the **National Masters Indoor** championships held on 30th January 2022 in Athlone, Snezana Bechtina took W40 200 gold and silver in the 400. 1500 silver for Jenny Johnston W35. In the high jump Edel Maguire went 1.35m to take W60 gold and also took 400 gold in a time of 1:11.97, both National Indoor W60 records.

The **National Senior Indoors** were held on 26th and 27th February 2022. A small number of ladies competed. Leah Bergin and Natalia Gill were 3rd and 5th in the respective heats. Leah Bergin also competed in the 400, finishing 3rd in her heat in 58.37. Anna Heavey clocked 8.48 in her heat. In the 3000 Emma Mitchell was 8th in 9.37.93.

The **NIA Live** series returned for 2022 with the first event held in late December '21 into January through to February '22. Edel Maguire raced across 60m, 200, 400 up to 800m over various nights also clocking up a 60 m W60 National Record of 9.28. Lauren Carr recorded a 60m PB of 8.08. Greta Streimikyte, Jenny Johnston, Alannah Cooley, Sarah Hawkshaw and Niamh Kelly all competing over 800 to 1500m. Leah Bergin and Amy Sheehy racing over 400.

A number of ladies competed in the last Indoor race of the season the **Leinster Junior Senior and Masters Indoors** in Athlone on 26th March 2022. Amy Sheehy took silver in the Junior 400. Edel Maguire bagged 2 titles W60 200 in 31.42 and another National W60 record, also winning the long jump (3.86m). The 1500 women's senior was won by new member Niamh Kelly (then Letterkenny) in a PB 4.41.09 with Laura Tuite taking Leinster silver in 4.52.26. Jenny Johnston took W35 silver.



Other club activity

Two very successful Cross Country squad days were held during the Autumn. Around 50 athletes from the Junior and Senior squads enjoyed a training session in Santry Park on October 23rd, followed by lunch in the clubhouse and then a great talk to the athletes by Mark Kenneally. On December 11th the Masters followed suit with some 40 or so put through their paces by coaches Pamela and Eugene followed by refreshments after.

During November 2021 almost 70 female athletes across Junior, Senior, Master and all coaching groups responded to a survey created by Jenny and Laura. As a result of survey feedback, WhatsApp groups for Master athletes and Sprinters were created and have proved successful for communication, motivation and general comradery. As well as athletes indicating preferred events and upcoming race plans, almost a 1/3 of respondents indicated an interest in trying other events from shorter track events to javelin, long jump, shot etc. Other key takeaways were around areas athletes could benefit from support – many respondents would appreciate assistance with S&C, race day prep, nutrition, recovery and injury prevention. The feedback will be continually reviewed and actioned appropriately.

On 12th March 2022 to celebrate 'women in sport' week about 30 or so ladies from Juveniles through to Senior and Master fully decked in Clonliffe colours made the short trip to Poppintree Park, Ballymun for a Park run. There was a great welcome from the Park Run organisers, an enjoyable 3 lap course and refreshments were provided after.

Thank you to all the committee, coaches, athletes and volunteers for all your support, hard work and enthusiasm throughout the year.