



**Cork Athletics**  
Cork County Board, Athletics Ireland



## **Report-David Matthews Cork Athletics Development Officer**

### **Cork Athletics County Board 2015 AGM**

#### **Overview**

- Year in review.
- Coach Education.
- Club Support and Development Programme.
- Junior Athlete Development & Mentoring.
- Promotion of Athletics.
- Summary & Aims for 2016

#### **Year in review:**

Although 2015 was seen as a challenging year for those at the helm of World athletics, closer to home grass roots athletics continues to thrive, especially in Cork. The participation levels at schools, juvenile, senior and masters continue to grow. On the flipside the falloff of athletes between the ages of 15-18 is a cause for concern to all involved in the sport. However this falloff I can assure you is replicated right across all sports and not just Athletics. That said, it is something that we need to continue to focus on during 2016. Upon taking up my role as Regional Development Officer for Cork there were a number of key objectives for me to address. I hope to give you a brief outline of some these areas, if any delegate would like any further details I will gladly oblige. Approachability is one my coaching and working mantras.

#### ***Coach Education:***

Coach Education is seen as a keystone in Athletic development, it is the driving force of our Sport.

Sharing our ideas, improving our coaching skills and developing our knowledge.

I always say "*No one has a monopoly on Wisdom*"

#### **The following courses were held at CIT in 2015**

- 3 Athletic Leader Courses
- 2 Assistant Coach Courses
- 2 Level 1-Courses
- 1 Level 2 - (Athlone IT)
- 6 Workshops-Including Sprints/S&C/Middle Distance/Throws and Sports Psychology (not including a further 8 Cork Athletics Winter technical coaching series)



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This meant that we had a capacity to up skill over 250 Coaches within the county of Cork. The courses in Cork were very well supported. They are designed in away that it is completely Club driven.

On a personal note I completed Level 2 Endurance and Coaching Irelands Tutor 31 course over 5 weekends in University of Limerick under the guidance of CI Liam Moggan.

#### **Club Development and Support programme:**

During the year we saw a number of New Clubs Spring up around the county, servicing the needs and demands of a local athletes. Even as recently as last week I was helping one of our news clubs "Aghada running Club" offering practical support and advice - for example providing much need equipment and complementary Coaching places on the forthcoming Coach education programme.

This year I helped out a number of clubs with regard to Coaching structures and best practise. By meeting with Club Officials, identifying issues and working with the clubs to find a solution. The aim is allow the club to reach their full potential. My impartiality and objectivity helped greatly and it is a service that is has further potential, and I am planning to expand this in the coming year.

#### **Junior Athlete Development and Mentoring:**

*"We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build the youth for the future"* (Franklin D Roosevelt).

Athlete Development and mentoring of Junior and U-23 Athletes was one of the key remits of this role. During the year I made it my business try and meet as many athletes as possible. By making myself accessible and approachable. Key to this is attending as many events as I could- according to my diary I attended over 20 Junior Athlete Events in 2015. A Sample of events I attended included:

- Regional Schools Cross Country & Track & Field
- County Cross Country & Track & Field
- Provincial and All Ireland Cross Country & Track & Field
- Regional & National Training camps

At these events you get the opportunity not only to meet the Junior athletes but also more importantly to meet their coaches. It provides a vital link with regard to Athlete development and helps promote Cork County Board policy on helping our Junior and U-23 athletes full fill their potential.



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During 2015 I also helped mentor a number of Athletes- providing vital and impartial advice on all aspects of training and High performance. These were athletes based both here within the county and those on scholarship in USA. This area has massive scope for future development and I will strive in the coming year to ensure that *ALL* cork athletes can avail of this service.

#### **Promotion of Athletics:**

When we mention the word athletics- We sometimes just think of Track and Field and to be honest I may have been guilty of that in the past. However when you put the Development Officers hat on you have to look at every discipline within our sport and I hope that I have done it justice this year. A number of Events and areas were highlighted by the Liaison Committee and County Board these included:

- **John Buckley Graded Track and Field Programme**

I was asked to help out this summer with the Graded Track and Field programme, again I was only complementing the fantastic work that was been done by the committee. I basically kept promoting the event within county and throughout Munster. I'm sure that delegates will receive a report on the Event, it was clear that the participation levels increased in 2015. In 2016 I am hoping help the Committee in any way I can, I believe that there is further scope to increase the numbers.

- **Promotion of Cross Country**

Towards the end of track and field Season in 2015, I met with Paddy Buckley to plan the upcoming Cross Country Season. One of our objectives was to ensure that Cork County teams were represented at the various Championship (Junior/ Novice/intermediate/Senior) . Active engagement with both Athletes and coaches was key to this success. With Paddy as Team manager, I contacted athletes and coaches providing a vital link between the Athletes/Coaches and the County Board. It has been very successful this and plans are a foot to further develop this in 2016/2017. All this would not have been possible without the Support of the County board. For example the Board is Supporting the Travel and accommodation of athletes traveling to the Intermediate and Masters Cross Country in Dundalk this weekend.



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- Working with Cork Sports Partnership.

I had the pleasure of working with Cork Sports partnership this year in particular with Pdraig Healy (Sports Inclusion Disability Officer). The Cork County Athletics Board supported the Special Schools Sports hall Athletic Programme this year with a Grant for Equipment and delivery of Little Athletics Hall competition. I was delighted to recently attend the finals held at Mallow GAA. \* A report from Pdraig is attached to this.

#### **Summary & 2016**

I am looking forward 2016 with great anticipation. It is fair to say that there was a steep learning curve for me in 2015 but I feel met the challenge with gusto and enthusiasm. I would not have achieved or met 50% of my targets without the help and support from the county board and its officers. Without singling out one person- John Quigleys help to me in spreading the news and information was invaluable, and I wish to thank him publicly. If any club athlete/Coach or delegate would like to contact me please do not hesitate to call- anytime. Here's to a successful Athletic year to all our members-

Yours in Sport,  
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