

## National Athletics Awards 2009

The 2009 National Athletics Awards were held recently in the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Santry.

The Outstanding Official Award was won by Joe O'Flynn of Leevale & Cork.



*Joe O'Flynn*



*Joe O'Flynn with Eamonn Coughlan*

*'Irish athletics would grind to a halt without people like Joe O'Flynn.*

*He has served athletics tirelessly for decades and generations of athletes in Cork and beyond are indebted to him for his dedication and efficiency in carrying out duties from time-keeping to managing teams at county, provincial and national levels.*

*His expertise as a technical director has also helped the Cork City International Sports, Cork Marathon and Mini-Marathon become headline events in the Irish athletics calendar.*

*Joe is widely known in the broader Irish athletics community as the manager of Cork teams who have won honours at every level in road, and cross-country running under his stewardship over the last 30 years.*

*He has also devoted himself to the less glamorous duties that help grassroots competition survive and prosper.*

*For many years he has been a recorder at County and Munster Cross-Country Championships; whatever the weather, be it rain, hail, snow, fog or gales, he is inevitably to be found in the middle of the field, far from shelter, handing out numbers and singlets. He is usually the first to arrive at these events and often the last to leave, waiting until the end to ensure that results have been meticulously recorded and checked.*

*During the summer, Joe comes into his own as a finish judge and is a familiar figure at juvenile, schools, senior and masters' competitions at local, county, provincial, national and – on occasion – international levels. While many people struggle with the stopwatch since the advent of digital timing, Joe continues to multi-task – taking times, calling results and counting laps.*

*On a personal level, Joe is highly regarded and respected for his hard work and honesty. A true gentleman, he is unfailingly pleasant and he arrives at every event prepared and instinctively knows how to deal with any problem or situation that may arise.*

*This award is Irish athletics way of saying a heartfelt thanks to this modest man who continues to make an immense contribution to our sport.'*

Joe was a very popular winner and was congratulated by current athletes, past athletes and officials all who are so grateful for all the hard work done and still being done by Joe.



***Joe O'Flynn with the O'Rourke Family & Liam Horgan of Leevale***

Derval O'Rourke of Leevale who won bronze in the 60m hurdles at the European Indoor Championships and finished 4<sup>th</sup> in the same event in Berlin at the World Track & Field Championships was named track athlete of the year. Her coaches Terri & Sean Cahill were named Coaches of the year.

Galway born Olive Loughnane who won silver in the walk at the World Track & Field Championships in Berlin and is based in Cork, was named race walker of the year, athlete of the year and also credited with the performance of the year.