

BELGOOLY AC

Rosaleen Walsh

Beggarly Athletic Club was established in December 1986 and in that relatively short period of time have grown into a very successful BLE/BLOE club.

The number of juvenile athletes amongst the members has increased dramatically and between them have countless County, Munster and National titles. Ann Mather was the first to win an All-Ireland medal when she won the girls' under 14 long jump in 1991. The most recent National success has been Leonard McCarthy who won an amazing three gold medals at the National track and field events at Tullamore. Donna McGrane represented Ireland at the International level last year and was second in the long jump and a member of the winning relay team.

The amount of time and effort dedicated to the younger members at the club is of great credit to the coaches and juvenile officials at Belgooly.

Back in December 1986 the first committee of Belgooly Athletic Club elected read as follows: President: Dick Copithorne, Chairman: Joe Copithorne, Secretary: Rosaleen Walsh, Treasurer: Tony Dwyer, PRO: Bridie O'Donovan. The current chairman is Flor Lovell who was elected at the club Annual General Meeting last November and Flor is among the many marathon runners at Belgooly AC.

In 1987 the Belgooly senior men's team were third in the Belfast Marathon with the team being Eddie Mullane, Sean Walsh, Dan Linehan and Joe Copithorne. Eddie Mullane has had honours in the National marathon and half-marathon Championships. In 1991 Martina Coleman had a very successful cross-country season in the County and Munster Novice Championships and was awarded the Carrigdhoun Sports Star Athletic Award for her achievements. In recent seasons Joe Copthorne has been a member of the Cork over 35 cross-country teams winning silver and bronze medals. Joan Keating has won countless All-Ireland veteran track and field Championship titles in the last two seasons and was a nomination for a Sports Star Award last year. The club have organised several runs for local Charity Groups and promote two very popular annual road races - the Belgooly 10 mile and 4 mile. Belgooly are at the moment planning the upcoming 10 mile and also have the annual sports meeting in June.

The outstanding achievements of the club were recognised in 1992 when the Lord Mayor of Cork at the time Denis Creegan gave the juveniles a reception at Cork City Hall and last September - Kinsale Urban District Council honoured the club with a presentation of the Kinsale Coat of Arms.

This year the club have won the AIB sponsored trophy for the best West Cork club at the track and field Championships held over two legs. At the Belgooly Sports the juveniles were the best overall club for the second successive year.

The recent All-Ireland honours are yet another chapter in Belgoolys' short existence and no doubt their will be many more in the future.

Keep up the good work Belgooly !