

BLARNEY/INNISCARRA AC

Mary Meagher

Blarney/Inniscarra Athletic Club in the catchment area of the club name, attracts membership from a much greater area than this. It caters for membership, starting with under eight girls and boys, to senior level. The club has a proud history in both track and field events at all ages.

The success is due to the athletes commitment and in the main to the dedication of the club's excellent coaches. However, great support and hard work by many people help to make the club the thriving success it is today.

There are records of organised athletics in Blarney back into the last century. Blarney sports celebrated its centenary in 1986. Athletics was first organised by the young G.A.A. until about 1922 when the N.A.C.A.I. became the governing body of athletics in Ireland until 1967. During this time Blarney Athletic and Cycling Club was a big force to be reckoned with in the County, in Munster and nationally as well as internationally on numerous occasions.

The club had a few lean years after 1967 when the flag was kept flying by M.J. Buckley (our President) with the help of a dedicated few including the late Andy Vaughan. The momentum started again in the '70s and because many of the young athletes were from the Inniscarra parish the club name was changed to Blarney/Inniscarra A.C. in 1976 and catered for mostly juvenile athletes.

The club has gone from strength to strength since then with senior and juvenile athletes having International titles to their credit and two athletes are at present on athletics scholarships in USA. Part of the club's success is because it is a fun club with weaker athletes just as welcome as the many top athletes. New members are always welcome.

The 1990 season was very successful. In all twenty-nine medals were won at National level, thirty-one at Munster level and fifty-two at county level. Every year the club holds an athletics league and for many in the club this very successful venture is the stepping stone to further successes in the area of track and field athletics.

Valerie Vaughan ranks among the top women runners in the country and is at home in any event from the 1.500 metres upwards. She was the 1992 National senior Champion over this distance and has still much to offer through her athletics.

Another senior athlete who has enjoyed much success, although still maturing, is thrower Brian Whitty. He is among the best in the County and has a particular aptitude for the shot and the 56 pound events, having taken many juvenile and junior National medals. There are many other very promising athletes in club who will break into senior ranks in the coming years although of course many have already won many an event at senior level already. No less talented is Jerome Murphy, already taking medals in the shot putt and discus. Edel Meagher is perhaps among the better prospects, already being ranked in the national senior lists in the shot and discus. A schools' International Edel is also a capable hurdler and long jumper.