VETERAN RACE



Victory wave

"On a good day, in the right race, I am definitely capable of 2.12."

his pace running. Local Tralee Joggers club runner, Eoin Stack, acts as his mentor and accompanies Griffin on the bike as he logs his long mileage at the weekends.

There has been great support too from his wife and from the local travel company, Sol International, whose logo he sported in Dublin. Adidas have also shown good faith in the Dublin and National Marathon champion and for the past few years he has not had to worry about buying training gear or shoes.

"The local support that I receive is really tremendous and something I deeply appreciate", the modest Kerryman said.

At 30, it looks like he could still have his best running years ahead of him. Now, his immediate target is the national marathon in Clonmel in 1990. His aim there is to make the Irish Marathon team for the European Championships. Like most other Irish marathoners, he would prefer to run Boston or London as a selection trial, but BLE have, in their wisdom, decided otherwise.

"I believe that on a good day, in the right race, I am definitely capable of 2.12", he said.

The coming year could well see this dream become a reality for one of the nicest guys in the sport.

DERRY SHOWS A TOUCH OF CLASS

touch of class was how one vastly experienced athletics aficionado described 52 year old Derry O'Driscoll's brilliant 2.30.56 marathon performance in Dublin on Marathon Monday.

This was a quality performance by the St. Finbarr's runner and one good enough to sweep the top spot in the O/40 age category. It was yet another top drawer run for the Cork father of eight who for the past several years has been a model of consistency on the Irish roads.

As with every race he enters, Derry went out to give his very best possible performance in Dublin. He ran through the opening mile in 5.30 and at 3 miles he was joined by his great Cork rival, John Buckley. Neither runner knew at that point that Michael Roche of Waterford, last year's second placer in the O/40 division, was a non-starter. "It was probably best that way", Derry said, "as we were pushing all the way at that stage."

By five miles John Buckley had pulled away from Derry O'Driscoll but the CMP Dairy general manager had his pacing right and he felt his confidence rising as he hit the 10 mile checkpoint in 56.59.

Soon he had hauled in John Buckley and he was also conscious of a good German veteran who was making a serious challenge on the vets' title.

At 15 miles Derry spotted Michael Roche in a spectator's role at the side of the road. The sighting further strengthened his resolve to push on harder and by 20 miles he felt that the race was within his grasp. His second 10 mile split was just 57.01 and his only serious challenger at that point was the Scot, Gregory Reddan, who joined him on the road for a brief period.

By 24 miles the race for the leading vet of '89 was over but there was no let up for Derry as he maintained his poise and rhythm all the way to the finish.

The Dublin victory crowned a great year for the Corkman. Already he had won the National O/40 10 mile and half marathon championships, but the Dublin victory was particularly special to him.

A moderate weekly training mileage of 80 miles is Derry O'Driscol's recipe for success. The training week consists of a daily 10 mile run at lunchtime with Tim Goulding, Tim O'Donovan and Billy Horgan in about 63/64 minutes. A weekly speed session of 8 x 400m (63-68 secs) or some 200m runs is also included in the schedule.

Regular racing, Derry feels, is the key to keeping his sharpness. "I also do a lot of physical work at home in my garden, such as wood chopping and general gardening and I feel this helps my overall strength", he says.

Derry is a master of time management and as well as his busy schedule as general manager of CMP Dairy and his running, he also finds time somehow to pursue a night-time course in Law 0at UCC. Now that he has won everything on the roads in Ireland in the veteran class, it is likely that Derry will soon be making a big impression in the vets' division of some international marathons such as Boston or London. Derry has no intention of slowing down going into the '90s.



Derry (117) with John Buckley, Billy Porter and Robert Taylor