NIKE AIR
THERE IS NO FINISH LINE
JUST DO IT.

RACE REPORTS

Mazda National Marathon
Clonmel

18 April
By Kathryn Davis

• ***Left to Right: Padraig Griffin, BLE President, National Marathon Winners Brid Murphy and Seamus O'Donnell with Tipperary Mazda dealer, Gerry Pierse.***

SEAMUS O'DONNELL finally tasted the sweet elixir of marathon success when he won his first ever marathon from eighteen starts in a race full of incidents in Clonmel.

Marathons are always fraught with danger and this race was not without its moments of anxiety. Having negotiated twenty-six tortuous miles, and with the finish in Clonmel tantalisingly in sight, the lead car turned left and Seamus duly followed. Officials quickly redirected the winner onto the course, but to do so he had to duck under two ropes, an effort which left him lightheaded. As he straightened up his six foot frame with only 80 metres to negotiate, veering around a sharp bend he stumbled, but gathered himself sufficiently to stop his wristwatch as he crossed the line.

With Roy Dooney already secure in his nomination for Stuttgart, the winner had to dip under 2 hrs. 16 mins. to join him on the starting line. As early as the opening 5K in 16.41, it was obvious that this time would not be achieved on a humid day with a strong wind facing the athletes on the second half of the course.

The leading group consisted of John Griffin, Richard Mulligan, Aidan Donaldson, Noel Hyland, Pat Heffernan and O'Donnell, with Hyland and O'Donnell the first to drop off the pace, to be followed later by Heffernan.

At the 10 mile mark in 52.32 O'Donnell had rejoined the three leaders as they faced the more demanding parts of the course, with Mulligan and Donaldson losing contact soon after and finally abandoning.

At half way in 68.32 the prospect of a strong wind faced both Griffin and O'Donnell. Locked into battle, Griffin's pitter patter upright style contrasted starkly with O'Donnell's more languid, loping stride as they wondered who would capitulate first. Four miles from the sanctuary of the tape it was Griffin who finally broke as the Galway RTC lecturer moved in front for the first time, with Griffin reduced to walking for the first time in a race over the distance.

O'Donnell increased his margin all the way to the finish, coming home in 2.23.38, almost five minutes ahead of a gallant Griffin, with Hyland's conservative pacing paying dividends as he overcame Heffernan to take bronze.

Brid Murphy also had reason to celebrate as she took her first victory and retained her veterans title. Nebraska-based Catriona Dowling, home on holidays for the race, had kept Murphy company for 13 miles before the Dubliner moved ahead. By 20 miles she had a lead of two minutes, but the Leevale girl never panicked and closed her down with 2 miles to race to win in 2 hrs 51 mins 33 secs, with Dowling suffering badly over the final miles.

1. Seamus O'Donnell, GCH 2.23.38; 2. John Griffin, St. John's 2.28.18; 3. Noel Hyland, Raheny 2.31.26; 4. Pat Heffernan, Croke 2.33.02; 5. Bernard Feerey, Clonmel 2.34.31; 6. Kevin Maunsell, Comeragh 2.34.33; 7. Tony O'Connell, Comeragh 2.36.25; 8. TJ O'Loughlin, Comeragh 2.36.55 (V2); 9. Larry Foley, Donore 2.38.05 (V1); 10. Nollaig McEntaggart, Mullingar 2.38.56 (V1);

11. Adam Jones, Sportsworld 2.39.22 (V3); 12. Ronnie Fitzroy, Oisin 2.40.43; 13. Christy Ryan, Comeragh 2.41.56 (V1); 14. Joe Murphy, Eagle 2.47.13; 15. Liam Mulhall, Tinryland 2.50.08 (V1); 16. Tom Ryan, Eagle 2.50.33; 17. Brid Murphy, Leevale 2.51.33 (1st W); 18. Tony Duff, Oisin 2.52.03 (V1); 19. Jim O'Sullivan, Tipp 2.52.49 (V1); 20. Denis Hegarty, Eagle 2.53.08;

21. Eddie Harrison, Portmarnock 2.53.11; 22. Tom Mackey, Kilmurray Ibrick 2.53.34; 23. Gary Clarke, Oisin 2.53.48 (V1); 24. Tom Cahill, Clonmel, 2.54.36; 25. Hugh Gallagher, Letterkenny 2.56.00; 26. William O'Connell, Clonmel 2.56.50; 27. Cathrina Dowling, DCH 2.57.29; 28. Daniel Byrne, Mallow 2.57.55; 29. Pat Brady, Clonmel 2.58.09 (V2); 30. Derek O'Carroll, Blackrock 3.01.11;

31. P. Holohan, KCH 3.01.17 (V2); 32. Michael Broderick, Listowel 3.01.39; 33. Michael Hennessy, KCH 3.02.35; 34. Stephen Rowe, Portmarnock 3.02.50 (V1); 35. Tom Lorrigan, Clonmel 3.02.56; 36. Brendan Ahearne, Clonmel 3.02.58; 37. John Foley, Clonmel 3.04.19 (V1); 38. John Laste, Clonmel 3.04.19; 39. Fintan Havelin, Ind. 3.04.22; 40. Brian Stewart, Nth Belfast 3.04.42 (V1);

41. Edward Walshe, KCH 3.10.08; 42. Pat Hickey, Ind. 3.11.03; 43. Jim Gaffney, Mallow 3.12.36 (V3); 44. David Brady, Ind. 3.13.30; 45. Ray Prendergast, Clonmel 3.13.53; 46. Tim Burke, Ind 3.13.57; 47. Gerry O'Connor, Ind. 3.13.58; 48. Eamonn Sweeney, Clonmel 3.18.20; 49. William Daly, Ind. 3.19.24; 50. Eric Crockett, St. Finbarrs 3.21.20 (V1);

51. David White, Cork 3.21.21 (V1); 52. Donal Arnott, Cork 3.21.35; 53. Marie Morley, St. Finbarrs 3.21.36 (V3); 54. Dermot Maguire, Comeragh 3.21.47; 55. Martin Clancy, Kilmurray Ibrick 3.22.23; 56. Gerry Forde, Blarney 3.27.40 (Wheelchair); 57. Gerard Tiernan, Swords 3.27.46 (V2); 58. Gerard Skelly, Finns 3.27.46; 59. Angela McEvoy, St. Finbarrs 3.28.34; 60. Pat Dolan, Premier 3.29.11 (V1);

60. Pat Dolan, Premier 3.29.11; 61. Martin Malone, KCH 3.29.36; 62. Michael Tobin, Clonmel 3.29.37; 63. Martin Tyrell, KCJ 3.29.38; 64. John Holland, Mallow 3.29.51 (V2); 65. Thomas Morgan, Westmeath 3.33.17 (V4); 66. Maurice Mullins, Fingal 3.33.36 (V3); 67. John Martin, Cork 3.33.47; 68. Gabriel Brady, Dublin 3.33.51 (V1); 69. John Carew, Limerick 3.34.02; 70. Joe Hourigan, Midleton 3.35.11;

71. Tom Walshe, Premier 3.36.07 (V1); 72. Juergen Blissen, Listowel 3.36.54; 73. Paul Kelly, Dublin 3.38.11; 74. Martin Kennedy, Cahir 3.38.14; 75. Dolores Kelly, Dublin 3.45.45; 76. Aidan Brickley, Limerick 3.45.58; 77. Charlie Brady, Longford 3.45.59 (V3); 78. Eugene Kavanagh, Dublin 3.5258 (V3); 79. Pat Buckley, St. Finbarrs 3.53.19 (V4); 80. Patrick Boland, Dublin 3.53.19 (V2);

81. John Hartford, Portlaoise 3.56.39; 82. Gerard Fitzpatrick, Cobh 4.01.43 (V4); 83. Fergus Ryan, Dublin 4.13.56 (V2); 84. James Gallagher, Dublin 4.13.56 (V2); 85. Dave Martin, Dublin 4.14.08 (V3); 86. Gerry O'Connell, Redgate 4.14.22 (V2); 87. Bernice Glavin, St. Finbarrs 4.16.13 (V1); 88. Denis Ryan, St. Finbarrs 4.16.13 (V4); 89. Martin Hawe, KCH 4.18.08; 90. Jmes Collins, Togher 4.16.32 (V2);

91. Dave Condon, Macroom 4.39.57; 92. George Kavanagh, Tipp 4.41.24 (V4); 93. George Hutchinson, Athy 4.47.48 (V3); 94. Liam Bourke, Clonmel 5.08.52 (V3); 95. Alan Quinlivan, Tipp 5.09.00.