

## 1998 Mount Brandon uphill trial race report

John Lenihan battled through mist, wind and rain to win the senior men's section of the Mount Brandon uphill trial race and clinch 1998 Irish Mountain Running Championship. After a subdued showing on the opening flattish 8 kilometres, the experienced Kerryman powered past his rivals on the mountain to finish in a time of 63 minutes 24 seconds. His main rival for the championship Paul Nolan had a nightmarish race and could only manage 8<sup>th</sup> in the miserable conditions.

Behind the dominant Lenihan who is set to appear at his eighth World Mountain Running Championships in September, a close battle ensued on the rough windswept slopes of Dingle's highest mountain. As the runners climbed higher, the weather conditions got worse. Lenihan forged ahead to finish to win. At the finish, the recorder - a frozen Vivian O'Gorman - had to wait as Gerry McGrath took 2<sup>nd</sup> some three minutes behind the Irish champion. The former Belfast Marathon winner was followed home by Colm Rothery, Francis Cosgrave, Aonghus O'Cleirigh and Kevin Thompson. Jonathan Lamont came in a disappointing 7<sup>th</sup> after being prominent on the flatter opening section.

In the absence through injury of Robin Bryson and Noel Berkeley, the following team was selected for the Worlds in Reunion. John Lenihan (Riocht), Gerry McGrath (Dundrum South Dublin), Colm Rothery (Metro St. Brigids), Francis Cosgrave (Blackrock), Aonghus O'Cleirigh (Dundrum South Dublin), Kevin Thompson (London Irish). Later, Francis Cosgrave dropped out of the team and was replaced by Jonathan Lamont who gets his first vest.

The womens race was won by Letterkenny's Margaret Synott in her first ever mountain race and she was followed home by Una Creagh (Crusaders) and Anne O'Kearney (Altringham). Riocht's Majella Diskin finished 4<sup>th</sup> over 4 minutes behind the winner, but had the consolation of clinching a thinly contested 1998 Irish Championship. The first three were selected to go to Reunion with Beechmount's Teresa Duffy. Teresa managed to miss the race despite having driven nearly 400 miles from Belfast to compete. She couldn't find the start!!

The Junior men's race was won by another debutant - the national junior 3,000 metres champion Gary Thornton (Galway City Harriers) in a time of 39 minutes 32 seconds. The winner was followed home a minute and a half later by Donore's Mark Doyle. Longford's John Campbell was third and just headed Limerick's Barry O'Callaghan who made the team for the second year in succession. However Mark Doyle's record of 4 Worlds with a fifth next month will surely never be beaten.

The Junior women's race saw a tussle among the inexperienced leaders for the three available places. Thurles Crokes' Madelaine Dorney scored another surprise debut win over East Cork's Olga Cronin who went slightly astray on the misty course. Amanda Hanly (Lough Ree) finished 3 seconds behind the Midleton girl and took the final place. The team officials are Douglas Barry (Manager) and Vivian O'Gorman (Assistant).