

**Club Photograph
1959**

- 1967 :** Formation of BLE following dissolution of AAU and NACA. Members of club had for years worked behind the scenes to resolve split. Paddy McGovern became a member of original executive. Won 5 places at inaugural BLE trials - P. Conway threw shot 17ft further than nearest rival. 25th Anniversary party held at South County Hotel on 21st April.
- 1968 :** New club tracksuit launched. Move to find new premises.
- 1969 :** General decline in athletics in Ireland caused our membership to drop to its lowest since 1958. Sunday training with Denis Phelan commenced.
- 1970 :** We collected 18 medals at National Championships - more than any other club. Louis Jordan broke Bob Tisdall's Irish Decathlon record.
- 1971 :** Total membership now 273. International against Spain saw Vinnie Becker, Phil Conway and Chris Farrell represent Ireland. Committee of parents formed to look after juveniles. We won 14 gold medals at National Juveniles. Two members elected to national office : Jim Moran as president and Paddy McGovern as treasurer.
- 1972 :** P. Conway gained Olympic selection with a shot putt of over 60ft - first Irishman to exceed this distance. Club's 30th Anniversary saw presentations to our two hardest and most dedicated members - Brendan Hennessey and Louis Vandendries.
- 1973 :** Crusaders Road Race extended to include ladies. We won first BLE 4 x 100m relay - Jackie Spence, Lucy Moore, Sheila Flatman and Aileen Morrison. Aileen Morrison's 400m time of 54.1 set national record for the second time that year. The year was marred by the death of Brendan Hennessey whose memory and ideals have stood the test of time.
- 1974:** Caroline O'Shea joins. New National League formed which ladies won and men finished 5th due to poor track performances. Phil Conway presented with the first Brendan Hennessey "Crusader of the Year" trophy. The first Hammerama organised. Gay Hogan shattered the Irish shot record with a

putt of 41 ft 8 1/2 inches.

- 1975:** The inaugural Brendan Hennessey team trophies were won by the ladies of Donore's and Guinness. We were the outstanding club in the Inter Club (graded meets).
- 1976:** Christine Malone was selected for the Irish cross country team while Caroline O'Shea was picked for the Irish school's team. Caroline also established a national junior record for 400m with a time of 55.0 seconds. Richard Gibson and Coli Ball competed with bravery at Junior AAAs. Mary Purcell again gained Olympic selection and ran the 800m.
- 1977:** It was agreed to award points in the G.V. Ryan and L. Vandendries Competition in accordance with IAAF rulings. Crusaders won National 'B' Road Race with the team consisting of Kieran O'Dwyer, John Bolger, Brian Tansey, Tony Smyth, Richard O'Mahoney and Joe Roe.
- 1978:** Caroline O'Shea broke her own national junior record in a time of 53.9 seconds. Mary Purcell ran 4.17 for 1500m and Mary Appleby set a 400m record of 59.5 seconds. New track-suits, singlets and shorts came into being. Tom Phelan received praise from the press for his marvellous 100m win in Omega and Tissot Competition. Crusaders won both these trophies. Marys Purcell and Appleby went to the European Championships.
- 1979:** Marita Walton became the first Irish woman to receive a scholarship to the U.S.A. Mary Purcell was 6th in the World Cross Country Championships and was 3rd in the European Indoor 1500m. Crusaders travelled to Lisbon and had a successful trip even if we didn't win!! In Belfast we finished 2nd to Annadale in a triangular meeting with NIAAA. Our first intermediate boys' gold medal for many years was won by Phil Montford with 6.47 in the long jump.
- 1980:** Mary Appleby was a brilliant 4th in the world and she set an Irish 400m h. record. Our junior men and our ladies sent successful teams to Paris. Bill Whiston a driving force behind our men's section

- emigrated to the U.S.A. Mary Butler became the 2nd Irish woman to complete an official marathon.
- 1981:** Michele Walsh joined Crusaders. A coaching committee was set up to look at improving our facilities and helping put Crusaders back as a driving force. On an unhappy note - our ladies failed to make the Tissot final for the first time.
- 1982:** The G.V. Ryan and Louis Vandendries was cut back from Saturday/Sunday to just one day - Sunday. It had originally been held on Friday night/Saturday. We celebrated our 40th Anniversary with a dinner in the Montrose Hotel - 89 people attended. Aileen Morrison set five PBs in the 800m and got to travel to Taiwan at the end of the season. Mary Purcell 1st in National Marathon. Tom Fennell passed on.
- 1983:** Ladies section celebrated 21 years and a surprise 80th birthday was held for Louis Vandendries. Ladies also regained the AIB League trophy.
- 1984:** Eddie Hanratty and Mary Friel were picked for the Irish team in the World Cross Country Championship in U.S.A. Caroline O'Shea became the first Irish woman to reach an Olympic track final in the 800m in Los Angeles. She had the goodwill and support of the whole Irish nation and kept many people glued to their TV sets. Conor McCullough also travelled to the U.S.A. and performed admirably. The club's traditional road race was replaced by an open race to raise funds. The Turkey Trot was born!
- 1985:** Following the sad death of Eoin Finlay in early 1984 his parents donated a sum to Crusaders which has been used each year beginning with this year to provide a prize in a club sealed handicap road race. The men were relegated for the first time to the 'B' division of the National League. Merger talks were floated for the first time.
- 1986:** An EGM was called early in the year to consider a possible merger with South Dublin and Dundrum.
- This proposal caused much hard feeling in the club and was eventually defeated. Dundrum and South Dublin went ahead with the merger. Carl O'Connell qualified for the European Games Stuttgart. This was also the year when the G. Ryan/ L.Vandendries Trophies were almost abandoned due to torrential rain. Crusaders men were promoted back to the A division of the National League.
- 1987:** Louis Vandendries who at 84 years of age was our current treasurer died peacefully on May 31st. His loss is still felt. Our ladies qualified for the league final - Louis would have been impressed! The first Bloomsday race was held starting on Sandymount Strand and was a great success.
- 1988:** Michele Carroll travelled to the World Championships in Rome as part of the 4 x 400 relay team.
- 1989:** We bowed to the soccer fever sweeping the country this year and transferred the G.V. Ryan, Vandendries from Sunday to Saturday. Unfortunately this didn't help Jack Charlton's team to win the competition that mattered. This was one of the best organised competitions ever and produced good results and subsequent good press coverage was due to Michael Byrne and Jim Mulherin.
- 1990:** Gary O'Sullivan won silver in National Senior and Juniors pole vault and then travelled to Stuttgart on the junior international team. The men's team pulled very strongly to finish 5th in National League - augurs well for the future. Carl O'Connell continued his forward march by finally breaking the long standing Irish long jump record.
- 1991:** We were represented at World Indoor Championships in an official capacity by Peter Hanlon (photo-finish). Michele Carroll sets a new record when she won her 22th & 23rd national titles.



**Junior c/c.
Santry - 1962**

OUR CHAMPION CRUSADERS



MARVELLOUS MICHELE

It seems only yesterday when Michele Carroll, then Michele Walsh, was part of a huge gang of St. Thomas McDonagh youngsters swarming all over the Belfield and Santry tracks, leaving an explosion of crisp packets, empty bottles and orange peels behind them. Even then, Michele stood out and though she dabbled with other events such as the long jump, it soon became clear that here was a sprinter of exceptional talent. At the age of 17, in 1977, she took her first national titles at 100m and 200m; 14 years later her total of Irish outdoor track titles stands at a staggering 23 and includes 100m, 200m and 400m trebles in 1987 and 1989.

Her time of 11.43 for 100m set in 1978 still stands as the Irish record - and last year she ran 11.79 less than a year after the birth of her son Eoin. Michele also has an Eastern Regional title at 800m to her credit; a versatile athlete indeed.

Her only ambition now is to qualify for the Barcelona Olympics. She came close to qualifying for Moscow, but it just wasn't to be - only a skeleton Irish team travelled to the Moscow games which were shrouded in controversy following the USSR invasion of Afghanistan.

Michele, still only 30, clearly has a few good times left in her, and already this season has come close to breaking her own record for 60m indoors. Her progress during this vital season will be watched with interest.

National Title Holders

YEAR	EVENT	POS.	NAME	EVENT	POS.	NAME	EVENT	POS.	NAME
1967	100m:	1	J.Spence	200m:	1	J.Spence	Relay	1	
	80H:	2	P.Phelan		2	H.Tennison			
1968	80H:	1	J.Shaw						
		3	P.Phelan						
1969	100m:	2	J.Spence	200	2	A.Morrison	800m:	2	U.Kennedy
	100H:	1	M.Kyle						
1970	100m:	1	A.Morrison	100H	2	A.Morrison			
1971	100m:	3	A.Morrison	200m:	2	A.Morrison			
1972	100m:	2	J.Spence	200m:	2	A.Morrison	400m:	2	A.Morrison
					3	J.Spence			
1973	100H	3	S.Flatman	200m:	2	A.Morrison	400m:	1	A.Morrison
1974	100m:	1	R.Algar	200m:	1	A.Morrison	400m:	1	A.Morrison
	100H:	3	S.Flatman						
1975	100m:	2	R.Algar	200m:	1	R.Algar	400m:	3	M.Dunne
	100H:	1	R.Algar				800m:	3	M.Donnellan
	100H	2	S.Flatman				3000m:	3	G.Hickey
1976	100H:	2	S.Flatman	100H:	3	L.Moore	400	1	C.O'Shea
1977	100H:	1	R.Algar	100m:	3	R.Algar			
1978	100H:	1	R.Algar	100	3	R.Algar	400	1	M.Appleby
				400	1	M.Appleby	1500m:	1	M.Purcell
1979	200m:	3	R.Algar	400H:	3	M.Appleby	400m:	1	C.O'Shea
							400m:	2	M.Appleby
1980				400H:	2	A.Morrison	800m:	1	M.Appleby
							1500m:	1	M.Purcell
1981				400m:	1	C.O'Shea	1500m:	3	P.Appleby
1982	100m:	1	M.Walsh	400m:	2	C.O'Shea	800m:	1	A.Morrison
	200m:	2	M.Walsh						
1983	100m:	1	M.Walsh	200m:	1	M.Walsh	400m:	1	C.O'Shea
				400H:	1	M.Barnwell	800m:	1	A.Morrison
1984	100m:	1	M.Walsh	200m:	2	M.Walsh	400m:	1	C.O'Shea
							3000m:	3	M.Friel
1985	100m:	1	M.Walsh	200m:	1	M.Walsh			
1986									
1987	100m:	1	M.Carroll	200m:	1	M.Carroll	400m:	1	M.Carroll
1988	100m:	1	M.Carroll				400m	2	M.Carroll
1989	100m:	1	M.Carroll	200m	1	M.Carroll	400m:	1	M.Carroll
1990									
1991	100m:	1	M.Carroll	200m	1	M.Carroll			

Gay Hogan, originally from Ballymoney, Co. Antrim, proved a most welcome addition to the Crusaders squad when she moved to Dublin and joined us in 1974 after her marriage to club stalwart Sean Hogan. In 1964, she had made her international debut in a match against Scotland when she threw both discus and javelin, as well as high jumping. Two years later, she made it a throws treble at the All-Ireland Championship.

When Gay moved south, she resumed her throwing, despite regarding herself as semi-retired. She won national shot titles in 1974 and 1975 and national discus titles in 1974, 1975 and 1976. The family moved to Athlone and later Dungarvan and it wasn't until 1986 that Gay resumed her activities with the club, performing with distinction at league qualifying rounds and in the G.V. Ryan/ Louis Vandendries Trophy as recently as 1989.

[illegible]

DEREK MCCLEANE - LAST MINUTE MAN

There's no denying the quality of Derek McCleane's contribution to Irish athletics. He was part of an exceptional middle distance quartet - Noel Carroll, the late Basil Clifford and Ronnie Delany the other three - who rewrote the record books in the early 60's. They even combined as a crack relay squad, touring the U.S.A. indoor circuit in 1962 after setting a European record of 7.21.8 at 4x 800 yards.

But Derek did have a habit of leaving things until the last minute. His qualification for the European Championships in Belgrade in 1962 came only at the AAU Championships when he went under 1.50 at 880 yards for the first time, beating Noel Carroll. In Belgrade, he won the fastest heat in 1.50.8; improved that in the semi final to 1.50.1 and finished fifth in the final in 1.51.3. This was won by Manfred Matuschewski (Germany) in 1.50.5 - but only one tenth of a second separated the four. Derek's big aim now was the Tokyo Olympics. He had been left off the squad four years previously when Ronnie Delany won selection at both 1500m and 800m, a severe disappointment. But despite some good runs, including an Irish record of 2.10.3 at 1000 yards, the qualifying time eluded him.

Finally, at a graded meeting in Santry, paced and cheered on by his club mates, he ran a personal best of 1.48.9 to book his ticket. His good form continued in Tokyo - he ran 1.49.7 in his heat and 1.48.4, another personal best, in the semi-final. This was a tough race - even 1.47 wouldn't have qualified Derek for the final. He still ran his very best when it mattered most. So rather than remembering him as a man who had a habit of leaving it to the last minute, perhaps Derek McCleane should live in our memory as an athlete who knew how to peak perfectly.

National Title Holders

YEAR	EVENT	P1	NAME	EVENT	P1	NAME	EVENT	P1	NAME
1967				800	3	J.O'Neil	3000s/c	3	G.Nolan
1968	60m:	2	V.Becker	200	3	V.Becker	440	2	D.McClea
	100m:	2	V.Becker	120H	3	S.Power			
1969	100m:	2	V.Becker	200	3	V.Becker			
1970	100m:	2	V.Becker	200	3	V.Becker	400	2	J.Jordan
							3	J.O'Neill	
1971	100m:	1	V.Becker	200	3	V.Becker	800	2	J.O'Neill
1972	100m:	2	V.Becker	110H	3	S.Power			
1973							400H	3	F.Doherty
								3	M.Dermody
1974	100m:	2	V.Becker	200	2	T.Phelan			
	100m:	3	T.Phelan						
1975	110H:	1	L.Pennycook						
1976									
1977									
1978	110H:	1	J.Fortune	400	3	J.Christie	800	3	B.Jennings
1979	110H:	3	B.Mulhall				800	3	B.Jennings
1980	110H:	2	R.Miller	200	2	G.Delaney			
1881							800	2	B.Jennings
1982									
1983	110H:	1	R.Millar						
	800	3	B.Jennings	110H:	3	J.Hally			
1984									
1985									
1986									
1987									
1988							400H	3	K.Kirkham
1989							400H	3	K.Kirkham
1990									
1991									



MARY BARNWELL - HURDLER SUPREME

Mary Barnwell's finest moment came in 1978 when as a 20-year-old, she smashed the women's 400m hurdles record with a time of 59.5 at the George V. Ryan/ Louis Vandendries meet and qualified for the European Championships in Prague the following August. There she ran even faster, qualifying for the semi-finals with a time of 57.66 in her heat. In the semi-final, Mary finished fifth - but her time of 57.36 reduced her own Irish record yet again.

Two years later, she set the current Irish record of 56.51m at Sittard, but a bad back injury had already started to restrict her career, and soon after, she turned her attention to hockey. Athletics' loss was hockey's gain when Mary became a formidable force on the Irish national side. Mary Barnwell - a winner all the way!

PEGGY HOGAN MULLINS - MUDLARK

Back when Peggy Hogan started running, women didn't do long distances. Even in Crusaders, other founder members of the women's section like Jackie Spence and Hazel Tennison rarely ran over 880 yards. Peggy herself won her first international cap in 1964 at 880 yards, and took the Irish mile title in 1965. But her first love was cross country and she has the distinction of being BLE's first women's cross-country champion. That was in 1967, the year she also came third in the annual triangular international in Bary, Wales - her finest moment.

EVENT	POS	NAME	EVENT	POS	NAME	EVENT	POS	NAME	EVENT	POS	NAME
T.Jump	1	D.Martin				Shot	1	P.Conway			
H.Jump	2	L.Jordan	P.Vault	3	B.Smith	Shot	3	S.Hogan	Discus	3	L.Jordan
H.Jump	3	C.Torrell			V.McGann	Javelin	2	L.Jordan			
T.Jump	2	D.Martin									
H.Jump	1	L.Jordan	T.Jump	1	D.Martin	Shot	1	P.Conway	Discus	1	P.Conway
H.Jump	2	C.Farrell				Shot	2	S.Hogan	Javelin	1	L.Jordan
						Hammer	1	P.Conway	P.vault	2	B.Smith
800 P.Vault	1	B.Smith				Shot	2	S.Hogan	Discus	1	P.Conway
						Javelin	3	L.Jordan	Hammer	1	P.Heaplion
H.Jump	1	C.Farrell				Shot	1	P.Conway	Hammer	1	P.Heaplion
						Shot	3	S.Hogan	Hammer	3	P.Conway
						Discus	2	P.Conway			
H.Jump	2	C.Farrell	T.Jump	2	S.Power	Shot	1	P.Conway			
800						Shot	3	A.Clarkson	Discus	2	P.Conway
						Hammer	2	P.Conway			
						Shot	3	S.Hogan	Discus	2	P.Conway
						Hammer	2	P.Conway			
P.Vault	1	C.Berkeley				Discus	2	P.Conway	Javelin	2	T.O'Connor
P.Vault	1	C.Berkeley				Discus	3	P.Conway			
P.Vault	1	C.Berkeley				Shot	1	E.Diviney	Discus	3	P.Conway
			Shot	1	E.Diviney	Discus	1	P.Conway	Discus	3	E.Diviney
P.Vault	1	C.Berkeley	P.Vault	2	M.Dennehy	Shot	1	E.Diviney			
						Javelin	1	P.Ruffli			
						Hammer	3	C.Ball			
P.Vault	2	C.Berkeley				Hammer	3	C.McCullough	Shot	1	P.Quirke
P.Vault	2	F.Evers				Hammer	3	C.McCullough	Discus	1	P.Quirke
						Shot	2	P.Quirke			
P.Vault	1	F.Evers	Shot	1	P.Quirke	56lb dist	2	P.Quirke	56lb dist	3	E.McTigue
			Shot	1	P.Quirke	Discus	1	P.Quirke			
			Shot	1	P.Quirke	Discus	2	P.Quirke	Hammer	3	L.Archer
			Shot	1	P.Quirke	Discus	3	P.Conway	56lb	3	P.Quirke
						Hammer	1	C.McCullough			
						Discus	2	P.Quirke			
P.Vault	2	G.O'Sullivan	Shot	2	P.Quirke	Hammer	1	C.McCullough	Discus	1	P.Quirke
						Hammer	1	C.McCullough			

== KEEPING CRUSADERS RUNNING SMOOTHLY ==

by Kathryn Davis

During its long history, Crusaders has always had people who perform those little nameless unremembered acts such as raking the long jump pit, measuring throws or replacing innumerable laths displaced by either wind or body. Among those who selflessly gave of their time was Tom Fennell whose green Morris Minor car boot was a veritable Aladdin's Cave containing shots, discoi, hammers and measuring tapes. Javelins and pole vaults are adverse to fitting into confined spaces, so Tom overcame this by either strapping them onto the roof or allowing them to protrude out the window as, with brick on accelerator, he traversed both city and country.

Paddy McGovern and Jim Moran were members of BLE's first Executive in 1967 and they aspired to the Association's highest office, with Jim becoming the second President in succession to Tom McDonagh. Paddy was Treasurer of the World Cross Country Championship Committee in 1979 and it was through his management skill that the funds were acquired to purchase a headquarters for Irish athletes. From little acorns do big oaks grow but such lofty thoughts hardly entered Al Guy's head when he first came into contact with the sport in his native Clare as a sprinter/javelin thrower. But it is as an administrator

that Al has gained his greatest satisfaction. A former County and Regional Secretary as well as Competitions and International Secretary of the Association, he later moved onto the world stage, becoming chairman of IAAF Track Construction Committee and acting as Technical Delegate to many of the recent major Games. Last year he became the first Irishman to be elected to the European Council. Theo Ryan, Brendan Hennessey, Sean Kearns and Frank O'Shea were just a few others who made incalculable contributions to the enjoyment of sport. The distaff side has also been active with Kay Guy and Nancy Magaheran particularly prominent. In 1978 Kay created her own bit of history by being elected as the first woman to BLE's Management Committee, thus making the Guys the first husband and wife to attain that position. Unfortunately work commitments have lessened Kay's role recently, just when she seemed destined for higher office. Nancy is always willing to organise any event which falls prey to lack of officials, with jumps her speciality. Without the work of such officials the sport could not prosper and while the words are not often spoken, their efforts are always appreciated.



Tegral
THRUTONE
SLATES

GV RYAN/ LOUIS VANDENDRIES - Trophy Winners

Men			Women		
1954 Crusaders	1966 DUHAC	1979 Crusaders	1966 Crusaders (1st Ladies)	1974 Crusaders	1983 DCH
1955 Crusaders	1967 UCD	1980 Crusaders	1967 Crusaders	1975 Crusaders	1984 DCH
1956 Not held	1968 Crusaders	1981 DCH	1968 Crusaders	1976 Crusaders	1985 DCH
1957 DUHAC	1969 Crusaders	1982 DCH	1969 Crusaders	1977 DCH	1986 DSD
1958 Crusaders	1970 Crusaders	1983 DCH	1970 Clonliffe	1978 Crusaders	1987 Team Pume
1959 Crusaders & DUHAC tie	1971 Clonliffe	1984 DCH	1971 Crusaders	1979 Crusaders	1988 DCH
1960 DUHAC	1972 UCD	1985 Raheny	1972 Crusaders	1980 Crusaders	1989 DCH
1961 DUHAC	1973 Leevale	1986 DCH	1973 Crusaders	1981 DCH	1990 DCH
1962 Donore	1974 Leevale	1987 DCH		1982 DCH	1991 DCH
1963 Crusaders	1975 Limerick	1988 Raheny			
1964 Crusaders	1976 Crusaders	1989 DCH			
1965 Crusaders	1977 DCH	1990 DCH			
	1978 Crusaders	1991 DSD			

GEORGE V. RYAN - FOUNDER OF CLUB

The founder of Crusaders Athletic Club, George V. Ryan is remembered as a jovial Dubliner with a genial disposition. He was originally the founder and secretary of the Amateur Athletics Association where he displayed remarkable ability as an organiser and showed himself to be a true lover of athletics. He was

a member of Clonliffe A.C., but left to form Crusaders, a club dedicated to the development of young athletes in Ireland. He died in 1946, and the George V. Ryan Trophy was first held in 1954 to honour his memory.

LOUIS VANDENDRIES - OUR MOST EMINENT CRUSADER

by Peter Byrne

To Louis Vandendries, one of the great stations in life was to be a Crusader. He cherished the club, worked for forty years to promote it and he was never behind the door in manifesting that remarkable love affair with Crusaders A.C.

He was also acutely conscious of the obligations which membership of the club imposed. And in a variety of officerships, he was apt to make the point over and over again, as the following story illustrates:

Back in the 1950's Jim McDonnell was an accomplished second row forward for the Blackrock College Rugby Team. He was also a very useful discus thrower, who, in the summer months, loved nothing better than to represent Crusaders. At that time overseas trips were a rarity for rugby teams but Blackrock were among the first to push out the frontiers with a tour of Italy. Their itinerary, as it happened, included an audience with the Pope.

On the way out of St. Peter's, the Blackrock party, still moved by the excitement of meeting the Pontiff, encountered a group of Irish pilgrims on their way in to the basilica. There, striding out at the head of them, was the bold Vandendries. Was this chance meeting a cause of bonhomie, or chit-chat about the world being a small place? No, not a bit of it. "Mr. McDonnell!" barked Louis in an exaggerated annoyance. "Your sub is

overdue!"

That yarn has, I'm sure, been embellished over the years by David Guiney but it captures at least some of the man who, for so many, was the public face of Crusaders.

Louis came to Dublin from Belgium in the Forties, set up an office in O'Connell Street and proceeded to establish a string of Irish all-comers records for bass voice every time he picked up the telephone. That was the thing about Louis. Around him, the atmosphere might be high as a kite, but it made no difference to him. He never deviated a decibel from those deep baritone one-liners.

He competed, somewhat indifferently, for Crusaders, but it was as a legislator, first with the A.A.U.E. and later B.L.E. that he left his imprint on the sport. Over a bridge



Louis Vandendries

of 35 years, I can still recall the A.A.U.E. meetings down in Moran's Hotel in Gardiner Street, and the assembled intelligentsia of Irish athletics seated around a table that appeared to fill four-fifths of the room.

There was Louis, Billy Morton, Frank Duffy, Pat Mullally and, of course, the boss himself, Jim Moran, all men of stature to a very young reporter and, more importantly, all skilled practitioners in the art of wheeling and dealing in athletics. Sadly, all except Jim are gone to their reward but Louis and the others lived long enough to know that all the old bar-room talk about Irish athletics taking off once the A.A.U.E. was gone, was no more than hot air.

Twenty-five years into the history of B.L.E., the relative calm of those distant carefree days is still a source of comfort to us. So too are the memories of some of the foreign journeys undertaken with the Irish athletics team. There was, for example, that occasion in Brussels a long time ago when some of us drank a lot and, dare I say it, a little unwisely. And on a pub crawl of downtown hostelries in Brussels, we noticed - eventually - that one of our number (not Louis) was missing. We retraced our steps, stumbled on a large crowd of Belgians in high glee and then discovered the cause. There was our man on his knees in prayer in front of that statue of the little boy doing..... you know what.

That incident never made the papers at home but there were many other occasions when Louis Vandendries and his ilk were the harbingers of good news at a time when the country at large desperately needed it.

That, of course, was the era of the great Ron Delany, the man who provided us with the biggest Irish sport story of them all - certainly in my time - when he came powering down the finishing straight to win the Olympic 1500 metres championship. At a lower level, there was the brave aggressive running of Derek McCleane in the 800 metres and, not least, the ready response of Jimmy O'Neill every time the call went out from Billy Morton that he needed a "hare" for his big mile races at Santry.

And then, of course, there were Louis's Lovelies. Together with Maeve Kyle, our Mr. Vandendries was one of the prime movers in establishing women's athletics in Ireland, and in the years which followed, we came to admire the special talent of people like Peggy Mullen, Rosemary Murphy, Jackie Spence, Hazel Tennison, Janet Midleton, Maria Dunne and Aideen Morrison in setting the targets for the next generation of Irish athletes.

In later years Louis, clutching the inevitable cigar, was to be seen officiating as a timekeeper at B.L.E. meetings but, essentially, he belonged to a different era. His stage was the Irish Athletics scene of the 50's and 60's, and, no less than Billy Morton and the others, the manner of his stewardship is deserving of our undying gratitude.



BÓRD LÚTHCHLEAS NA hÉIREANN

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Congratulations to

Crusaders Athletic Club on
50 years contribution to Irish Athletics

CRUSADERS - PIONEERS OF EQUALITY

By Jimmy Meagan

Woman, a scribe once noted, is but an agreeable blunder. This apparent display of sexism and male chauvinism, one suspects, was penned as a gentle jibe at the female species. One hardly imagines it was written in rancour or derision. If it was, then the author had hardly heard of Crusaders, that friendly athletic bastion sandwiched between Serpentine Avenue and Churchill Terrace, an adjunct of Sandymount Avenue, the home of hockey club, Pembroke Wanderers.

A Crusader, the dictionary loosely tells us, is someone with a reforming instinct, whose adventurous spirit embodies zeal and enthusiasm. Crusaders certainly fulfils the definition in every respect, not least in the women's section.

The club came into being in 1942, in the middle of the Second World War, during a time of harsh privation, when survival, rather than sporting pursuits, was uppermost in the public's mind. Ireland, of course, was a neutral country, and life went on, sporting and otherwise, despite rationing and one or two German bombing expeditions which were accidental rather than designed, according to the historians. Crusaders, at the time, and still does, offered an outlet to those with sporting ability in the spheres of speed, strength, and muscular co-ordination.

Since then, Crusaders has become an athletic institution, producing many of the nation's best-known and most successful athletes domestically and internationally. Without question, Ronnie Delany is the best known of them all, and his exploits have been well chronicled elsewhere in this booklet. Suffice to say that Ronnie, sad to record, was more closely identified with Villanova than Crusaders - at least that is how this contributor remembers the times and the newspaper reports. Ronnie's most illustrious achievements occurred during his time at the American academy, but he wore the Crusaders singlet with distinction whenever the opportunity arose, and that was more than once or twice.

But it's the women athletes of Ireland who will be most indebted to Crusaders for helping them gain equality in a time when men dominated athletics. Although on a small scale, it was Crusaders who first provided female hopefuls with the chance to prove their competitive mettle in a sport in which the male stranglehold was complete. There was opposition to females running, jumping and throwing, mainly from

the clergy. In retrospect, the clergy - certain sections of it, that is - were not so much against women competing as opposed to the attire they wore in competition. Exhibiting their athletic prowess was one thing - displaying too much of their physical charms was another. Tennis and hockey were all right, but athletics..... well, there is a limit. Fanny Blankers-Koen, who won four gold medals in the 1948 Olympics in London, came to Dublin, attracted a capacity crowd at Lansdowne Road, and went back home - that was the only time the powers-that-be in Ireland seemed to show any interest in women's athletics. The spark that was lit shortly after the end of the war was quickly extinguished.

Maeve Kyle relit the flame over ten years later, and thanks to Crusaders, the Kilkenny-born Kyle competed in the Dublin club's singlet, and women's athletics were relaunched, successfully this time, and are now well established and stronger than ever.

Crusaders have made an immense contribution on the distaff side. The litany of female performers who helped bring the club to prominence is lengthy and distinguished, and one asks forgiveness if any of the club's feted females have been omitted from the honours list. It is nothing more than an aberration of the memory. There were Jackie Spence, Hazel Little (Tennyson), Gay Hogan, Rosemary Murphy and many others of a memorable era. In more recent years there was Mary Purcell, Irish 800m, 1500m and 3000m champion and National record holder for many years, who invested the sport with style and glamour, winning a number of British titles to add to her prodigious collection of major medals.

The 70's and 80's spawned not just Mary Purcell, but a little later Mary Barnwell, the Irish 400m hurdles record holder. Caroline O'Shea moved up from the 400m to the 800m, a judicious decision. She brought the Irish record to within a fraction of cracking the 2 minutes barrier. And then there was her remarkable bravery in reaching the 800m final in the Coliseum in Los Angeles. Injury, unfortunately, ended her career, as it did Mary Barnwell's but Mary Barnwell at least was able to employ her sporting versatility to excellent effect by going on to play for Ireland at hockey.

Another Crusaders athlete who made her niche was Aideen Morrison, winner of numerous Irish titles, and of course Michelle Carroll, a late arrival at the

Sandymount club. Michelle is still competing and winning, both indoors and outdoors. She holds the Irish records for the 100m and 200m, has captured over 20 national titles and is also the quickest Irish sprinter in the 60m and 200m indoors. At 30, she hopes to compete in her first Olympics in Barcelona - and nobody is more deserving of that honour.

Crusaders has also produced its fair quota of accomplished male athletes. Phil Conway comes readily to mind. Phil, an Irish champion shot putter and record holder in his time, was instrumental in the renaissance of hammer throwing in Ireland, and during that era long gone, our nation produced some of the world's best exponents of the sport. Phil's enthusiasm, coaching expertise and general input into the sport has been phenomenal, deserving of more credit than the dynamic Conway ever received or sought.

In their time, Derek McClean (remember his great battles with Noel Carroll), Jimmy O'Neill and Jim

Mulherin all brought honour and glory to Crusaders. And let's not forget Paddy McGovern, an administrator of prudence and diplomacy, whose exceptional negotiational astuteness and judgement helped forge productive links of friendship between the N.A.C.A. and B.L.E. after years of acrimony.

Last but not least is Sean Kearns, "Mr. Crusaders" himself, whose enthusiasm is boundless and has remained intact throughout a long, loving association with the club that goes back far and deep into the past. Sean has never looked for glory. He just loves running. Testimony to that is the 54 marathons he has run; he has never won any of them, but neither has he ever failed to complete the 26 miles-plus distance. He is a true Corinthian. And if the Sandymount club's founding members had been stuck for a name, perhaps Corinthians would have been an apt alternative.

Happy 50th Birthday, Crusaders. May there be many more.

BRENDAN HENNESSEY - CRUSADER OF THE YEAR

1974 Philip Conway	1983 Brendan Curtin
1975 Gay Hogan	1984 Caroline O'Shea
1976 Caroline O'Shea	1985 Carmel Carey
1977 Fionnuala Kennedy	1986 David Lavelle
1978 Mary Appleby	1987 Peter Hanlon
1979 Sean Kearns	1988 John O'Connor
1980 Mary Appleby	1989 Gay Hogan
1981 Eddie Hanratty	1990 Gary O'Sullivan
1982 Aileen Morrison	1991 Phil Conway



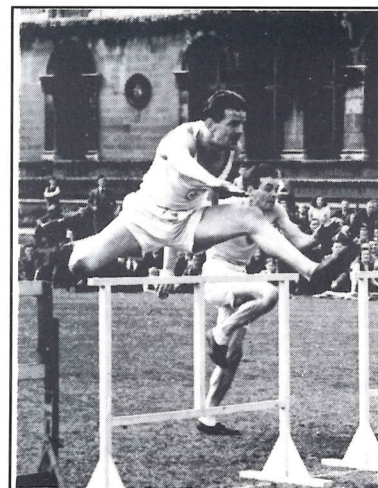
Brendan Hennessey

MR CRUSADERS - BRENDAN HENNESSEY

Brendan Hennessey coach and personality joined the club in 1944. He was responsible for attracting the wealth of young athletes to our club that later became national, European Student Games and Olympic champions. He was a life vice president.

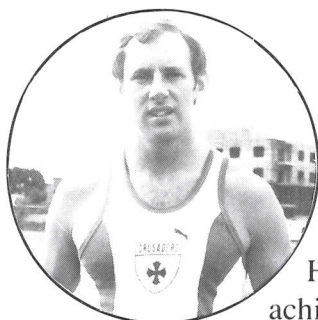
CAPTAIN THEO. RYAN

President of the club in the 50's and 60's. Former Army and Irish dual hurdles and decathlon champion in the early days of the club. (1940's)



Capt. Theo Ryan

OUR CHAMPION CRUSADERS



PHIL CONWAY - MR. IRISH THROWING

Glancing through the records of Crusaders Athletic Club over the past quarter century, one man bursts from the pages at every turn and that's competitor, coach and thrower extraordinaire, Philip Conway.

His qualification for the Munich Olympics in 1972 is the least of his achievements. Since 1964, when Philip first competed at NACA competitions for Blackrock, he has been the ever-present constant of Irish throwing, respected and admired by all.

This is simply because Philip, more than anyone, has kept the Irish throwing tradition alive in very difficult times. He joined Crusaders, aged 17, in 1965 with his eye on international junior honours and the following year headed off on scholarship to the U.S.A., where he was to remain until 1973.

In 1969 at Santry, he managed a unique treble, winning national titles at hammer, discus and shot all in the one day. Three years later he set an Irish record of 18.32m in the shot and headed for Munich where he threw 16.69 in the shot but failed to qualify for the final. As recently as 1987, Phil was ranked fourth in the discus with a best for the year of 46.06.

But perhaps his greatest claim to fame is the Hammerama, an annual winter hammer competition held on the last Sunday before Christmas every year. With prizes for the first six and in a number of age categories, this attracted huge numbers of throwers throughout the Seventies including the likes of Sean Pickering and Paul Head from across the water.

In recent years, Phil's expertise has been sought elsewhere and he helped the Tipperary hurling team get back in shape. But fortunately for us, athletics remains his first love, and he's now coaching UCD Athletic Club twice weekly as well as producing some fine athletes in Belvedere. We also know that we can rely on Phil to help make up teams for many years to come, with his peerless knowledge of the juvenile scene and his willingness to compete himself whenever asked. Phil Conway, the truest of true Crusaders, we salute you!

LOUIS JORDAN - TRY ANYTHING

Louis Jordan, the first Irishman to accumulate more than 6,000 points in the decathlon, and breaker of Bob Tisdall's record, was above all a man who moved to compete. In 1969, for example, he won national titles at the javelin and high jump as well as the decathlon. A year later, he set a new Irish record of 6,671 for the decathlon. He's part of a notable all-rounder tradition in our club - Brendan Curtin won decathlon titles for UCD before joining us, while Carlos O'Connell has been dealt with elsewhere.



Phil Conway, Guinness Sports 1967



Paul Quirke,
1979