

# SOME RECENT SPORTING ACHIEVEMENTS

*Padraig Griffin*



## ■ BREEGE CONNOLLY'S OUTSTANDING RUN IN RIO OLYMPICS *Photo Courtesy of John Connolly Leitrim Observer*

**KINLOUGH BORN** Breege Connolly, who took up running while based in Belfast and as a member of North Belfast Harriers, achieved the Olympic Marathon standard at last year's London Marathon. She became Leitrim's fifth Olympic competitor when she joined Fionnuala McCormack from Wicklow and Lizzie Lee from Cork, along with a hundred and fifty three other runners, at the start of the Marathon in Rio de Janeiro on the morning of Sunday August 14th. Two hours, forty four minutes and

forty one seconds later, Breege crossed the line in 76th position after working her way gradually through the field. At the 10K mark she was 114th in 37.43mins and had improved to 98th at the halfway mark which she reached in 1:20.02. Her more experienced team mates had also run superb races with Fionnuala McCormack coming home an outstanding twentieth in 2:31.32 and Lizzie Lee 57th in 2:39.57.

It was an impressive performance by Breege in difficult

weather conditions. She joins Eddie Leddy (1972, 1976), Colin Griffin (2008, 2012), Laura Reynolds (2012) and oarswoman Francis Cryan (1980) as a member of a small band of Leitrim sports performers who have made it to the highest platform in International Sport.

At home, Carrick on Shannon sprinter Eanna Madden had a very good season. In the Glo Health National Senior Championships held in late June at Morton Stadium, he won the 200m title in



■ Breege Connolly in her Olympic Gear  
 Photo Courtesy of John Connolly Leitrim Observer

■ Eanna Madden on his way to his AAI Senior 200m title in Santry  
 Photo Courtesy of John Connolly Leitrim Observer

21.37 to add to his Under-23 Indoor 400m title won in Athlone in February. With some impressive performances abroad added in, Eanna was selected as a member of the Irish 4 x 100m Relay Team for the European Championships in Amsterdam a few weeks before the Olympics. Along with Jonathan Browning, Marcus Lawlor and Jason Smyth, they finished 13th team overall and with a time of 39.52 were the third fastest ever Irish quartet.

Gerard O Donnell took the silver medal in the 60m Hurdles at the Glo Health AAI Senior Indoor Championships in Athlone last February, but an injury prevented him from making his mark later in the season. Eoin Gaffey of Mohill

AC also took a silver medal in the Under 16 Walk at the AAI Under Age Indoor Championships, while Ella Mc Daid of North Leitrim won the bronze medal in the Under 14 hurdles at the National Community Games in Athlone. Sibeal Reynolds of Ballinamore was runner up in the Long Jump at the AAI Indoor Games in Athlone early in February. Eleven athletes won individual Connacht titles at schools, indoor and outdoor championships, as well as the Carrick on Shannon Under 17 Girls team.

■ The Irish Relay Team in Amsterdam: Jonathan Browning (Ballymena & Antrim), Marcus Lawlor (Carlow), Jason Smyth (Derry) and Eanna Madden (Carrick on Shannon)  
 Photo Courtesy of John Connolly Leitrim Observer

