

PRESS RELEASE

25th September 2016

Clean sweep for Clare at Surf Rescue National Championships

In a weather-battered finale on Saturday (24th September 2016), Ireland's top life-saving athletes competed for the final event in the Irish Water Safety Sport series that saw Co. Clare retain their dominant position as National champions and capping their best season ever.

Meanwhile, host county Waterford took over from Cork as winners of the Masters competition.

Over 300 competitors from 14 counties competed in Senior and Masters events based around key life-saving skills that attracts more than 5,000 participants annually in Ireland.

Dramatic conditions driven by gale force winds at Tramore Life-Saving Centre saw Safety Officer Buddy Cuddihy switch the venue to Clonea Strand near Dungarvan while some events were also curtailed.

Events are based around core life-saving skills including speed, strength, endurance and equipment handling. In an exceptional performance, Clare's Bernard Cahill won all five of his events - Surf swim, Rescue Board Race, Rescue Ski Race, Ocean Man Race and Board Rescue.

Clare retained their overall titles in both Men and Womens' events while Waterford and Wexford teams were closest runners-up.

In addition to the overall prizes for both Men and Women's competitions, Clare Ladies also won the prestigious President's Trophy awarded for the best performance over 23 competitions throughout 2016 including the Pool Rescue Championships held in February. The team included Mother and daughter dual world record-holders Norma and Roisin Cahill.

"Clare's strength in heavy surf clearly stands to their credit while the team continues their strong tradition as Ireland's 'spiritual home' of life-saving sport in this country," commented John Leech, CEO of Irish Water Safety. "This record is now feeding through to our international performance as this year's world championships proves."

The national championships featured most of Ireland's eleven medallists from the recent World Championships in Holland that saw Gold in the Youth Worlds for

the 4 x 90-metre beach sprint relay won by Emer Kelly and Emma O'Brien from Wicklow and Georgina Steel and Denise Bolger from Wexford.

Cousins Bernard Cahill and Oisin McGrath won Bronze in the Board Rescue Race, a first for an Irish Senior team while Rory McEvoy won Silver in the Youth Pool event for the 50-metre manikin carry. All three athletes competed in the Clare team in Waterford at the weekend.

Also in Holland, a new world record was set by Denise Bolger from Wexford with Rosin Cahill from Clare in the Pool line-throw event with a new time of 11.06 seconds.

The 2017 season begins with the Pool Rescue National Championships at the University of Limerick in mid-February.

Ends

Sunday 25th September 2016

For further information, please contact: John Leech, CEO Irish Water Safety -
Mobile: 087 678 9600

Photographs for editorial rights free usage are available from David
Branigan/Oceansport - Mobile: 086 253 7782

John F M Leech, Chief Executive, Irish Water Safety, The Long Walk, Galway,
Ireland
Tel 091-534973; Fax 091-564700; Mobile 087-6789600 www.iws.ie