With some outstanding performances in school on the track and cross country Diarmaid now competes in endurance adventure races in Ireland and abroad. Known for his cool, calm and collected approach to racing, he has on many occasions ‘cut it tight’ getting to the start of a race. But he always has time for a hazelnut cappuccino which I assume he was indulging in when I caught up with him over the phone.

**When did it all start?**

*I was involved in Orienteering in primary school through Br O Connor and when I moved to Midleton CBS secondary it seemed like a natural transition to join the orienteering and running schools team under Liam. The routine for the first few years was a session after school on Tuesdays and Thursdays with a race or orienteering on the Sunday.*

Diarmuid won the All Ireland Junior Schools 1500m and was 2nd to Joe Sweeney in the Intermediate All Ireland Cross Country in Tinryland, Carlow in 2002.

*I remember that cross country race well because Liam had gone against the grain and told me to go out hard and get a position early one which I did and the race fell into place from there. I didn’t fully appreciate the significance of that result at the time. With Midleton CBS we won the senior schools all Ireland in 2004. It was a massive performance from a school not considered to be an athletics stronghold and it shows the impact Liam had.*

**Post School Years**

*I cant fully remember why I joined the club, it was a natural transition from our underage club glenbower. My fitness base from the structured school training helped massively when I joined the army. The army have their own internal cross country and track competitions. I went down the adventure racing route. Being part of the army means I have access to all sorts of outdoor training from rock climbing to kayaking. The AR races involve all different disciplines but mainly running, mountain biking and kayaking from 24 hours to 5 days.*

**How do you train for Adventure Racing?**

*Obviously you need the physical stamina and bike fitness is something I have struggled with so I try and get out on the bike as often as possible. A huge part of ARs is the mental stamina. I remember the first 5 day adventure race I did in France. The first stage was a 26 hour bike leg with huge climbs and I was shell shocked at the end and couldn’t comprehend continuing for another 4 days. But I did and that mental toughness stands to you overtime. In reality, it probably takes 4-5 years of competing in these long distance races to build the mental stamina required. The most difficult stage of an AR I ever did was a 23 kayak across Lough Corrib in the 5 day Iterra. But I had the experience and mental strength to draw on to continue.*

**Like about club?**

*Because I am based in Dublin the club is a link to home for me. It’s a no fuss, old school club that brings out the desire to get the best out of yourself, whatever level that may be.*

**Something to change about the club?**

*The steady flow of talent from Midleton CBS has dried up. It would be great to get some young blood into the club who share the same values as the previous generations of runners who came from the school.*

**Achievement your most proud of?**

*I definitely didn’t appreciate it at the time but making the scoring team for the county senior cross country win in Cloyne in 2010 was a proud moment for me. I think Liam must have planned the course that day because there was a beast of a hill in it.*

If this was the case then karma brought some balance to the day when Liam’s car got stuck in the muck.

**Any running goals for the future?**

*We’ve a big adventure planned for September with the kid on the way. Other than that I’ll do the Beast of Ballyhoura in a few weeks and look at doing a big AR abroad next year.*