

TIPPERARY ATHLETES



Liam Gleeson

by Michael O'Dwyer

Liam Gleeson was born on 2 October 1936 at Rosemount, Roscrea, County Tipperary. He was the third son of Patrick Gleeson, native of Curragharnen, Dolla, and Kathleen Gleeson (née Kennedy), native of Coolderry, Nenagh. His parents got married on 16 September 1931 in St Joseph's Church, Limerick. His father was in the drapery business in Roscrea, Thurles and Nenagh until he set up his own business in 1948 at 32 Kenyon Street, later 41 Pearse Street, Nenagh. During the two years Liam Gleeson lived in Thurles he played soccer, but after moving to Nenagh he also participated in hurling, rugby, athletics, and later, golf. At the Irish universities athletics championships he won the pole vault in 1965 and 1966 with University College Dublin, and in 1970 with University College Galway. He had even more success in the Irish senior national championships. During a twenty-one year span, he won the pole vault title ten times, was second six times, and was third once. He won the javelin twice, was second once, and third three times. In the decathlon he was runner-up once, and third on one occasion. Liam Gleeson broke the Irish pole vault record on a number of occasions, as well as representing Ireland in international competitions. He was a founding member of Nenagh Olympic Athletic Club, on 21 November 1955, as well as the club's first secretary and vice-captain. In late 1957 he left for England to take up an appointment on the clerical staff of British Railways. On return he took up employment with local veterinary surgeon Jack Powell, and at the same time put himself through college. After teaching posts in Borrisokane and Nenagh Vocational schools he established his own accountancy and audit practice in 1979 at 59 Kenyon Street, Nenagh. Liam got married to Anne Maher, of Tullaheady, Nenagh, in 1961. At the Cidona Sports Awards (now Annerville Sports Awards) held annually in Clonmel he won an athletics award for 1961, 1966 and 1973. Liam Gleeson died on 12 May 2010 at his residence St Conlon's Road, Nenagh, aged seventy-three, and is interred in Lisboney cemetery.

Titles Won at Senior National Championships:

National Athletic and Cycling Association Championships

1960	Javelin	160 ft 3 in.	(48.85 m)
1961	Pole Vault	12 ft 6 in.	(3.81 m)
1961	Javelin	182 ft 11 in.	(55.75 m)
1962	Pole Vault	12 ft 0 in.	(3.66 m)
1963	Pole Vault	12 ft 6 in.	(3.81 m)
1964	Pole Vault	12 ft 0 in.	(3.66 m)
1965	Pole Vault	12 ft 6 in.	(3.81 m)
1966	Pole Vault	12 ft 5 in.	(3.79 m)

Bord Lúthchleas na hÉireann Championships

1969	Pole Vault	12 ft 4 in.	(3.77 m)
1972	Pole Vault	13 ft 10 in.	(4.22 m)
1973	Pole Vault	13 ft 6 in.	(4.12 m)
1974	Pole Vault	13 ft 5½ in.	(4.10 m)