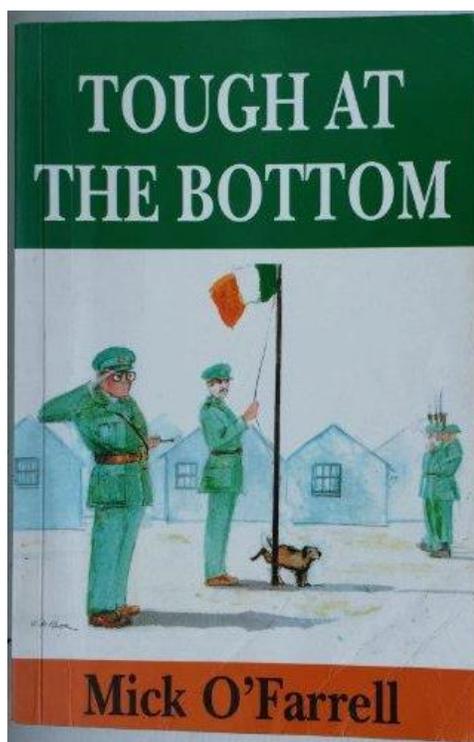


# TIPPERARY ATHLETES



## Mick O'Farrell

by Michael O'Dwyer

Mick O'Farrell was born on 18 May 1932 at Abbeyside, Dungarvan, County Waterford. He was a son of Luke O'Farrell and Mary O'Farrell (née Trant). His father was a member of the Garda Síochána and native of County Roscommon, and his mother was native of Lixnaw, County Kerry where they got married on 8 November 1927. Mick O'Farrell entered the Curragh Military Academy in 1949 and after two years as a cadet he was posted as a second lieutenant to the 13th Infantry Battalion in Clonmel. He was there for five years and was then sent to the Curragh where he mostly spent the remainder of his army life. He also served in Cork, Dublin, on the border and in Portlaoise prison and retired in 1975 with the rank of captain. Mick was an outstanding sportsman during his younger years. He played Gaelic football for Waterford and Tipperary and was also a useful hurler. He played rugby for a season with Garryowen and was best all-round athlete at the Irish army athletics championships for several years. At these championships, held at the Curragh, in July 1956, he set a new army record in the javelin with a throw of 156 ft 5 in. (47.68 m). He also won the triple jump title that day with 44 ft (13.42 m). Mick O'Farrell won the Irish decathlon title which was held at Belfield, Dublin on the weekend of 25 and 26 August 1956 when he was representing Clonmel Athletic & Cycling Club. He won with a total of 4,333 points, despite being only in eighth place going into the second day of events. Competing with the Curragh Athletic Club he finished third in the national decathlon championship in 1958 and 1959, and fourth in 1957 and 1961, and with Phoenix Harriers he finished in third place in 1960. He was also proficient in badminton, boxing and swimming, and in later years he trained Bective Rangers, Wicklow, Baltinglass, Brickey Rangers and Ashford. Mick O'Farrell wrote books, including *Tough at the Bottom*, which was launched in November 1999 at McKee Barracks, Dublin, and chronicles the highs and lows of military life. Other books he wrote are *Health and Fitness for the Couch Potato* (2000) and *Skint! The Diary of a Failed Punter* (2002). Mick O'Farrell died on 20 March 2003 at St Columcille's Hospital, Dublin, aged seventy, and is interred in St Laurence's Cemetery, Ballinroad, near Dungarvan.

**Titles Won at Senior National Championships:**

**National Athletic and Cycling Association Championships**

1956	Decathlon	4,333 points
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