

My memories of the 12th International Competition

By Nicholas Corish

At the outset I was one of the team who met the various groups of apprentices and their leaders at Dublin Airport cleared their baggage and had them transported to Gormanston College where all were accommodated.

We each had a photocopy of a letter from Irish Customs and Excise to help clear the extensive tool kits which all the competitors brought with them.

My strongest memory is of meeting the Japanese team who had to make, I think, four stops on their journey to Ireland. Everywhere they landed they had to undergo the strict examination by Custom Officers, had to unload all their various toolboxes for checking and then repack all again. When they finally arrived, exhausted, in Dublin they expected the same routine all over again. To their amazed delight my Custom and Excise letter cleared them all with only one cursory check. They thought I was the best thing since chopsticks and I was instantly made an honorary Japanese. On their departure at the end of the competitions with a very impressive haul of medals I presented the team leader with the magic letter which they treated as a holy relic.

During the teams stay in Gormanston College I had two functions

To ensure that all personal were up and breakfasted in time to board the transport to Bolton Street for the competitions. To welcome them back in the evenings for their meal and to deal with any problems they might have.

To organise sports and activities in conjunction with Mr. M.J. Doogan, Physical Education Teacher, Bolton Street to keep them entertained and relaxed in their leisure time. Among other activities I ran swimming sessions in the college pool and got quite a few non swimmers to swim.

I was a lieutenant in the Pearse Battalion F.C.A. at this time and was on annual training in Gormanston Military Camp during this period. Because the timetables for these activities did not coincide, I was able to carry out both sets of duties without any difficulties.

A well-known Jewellery firm in Dublin presented four valuable watches to the organising committee to be used as the committee saw fit in the competitions. The committee decided to ask the group of team leaders to nominate four of the local organisers whom they felt deserved to receive the watches for the help they had given during the period of the competitions. Mr M.J. Doogan and I were honoured by being awarded a watch each, to our great delight.

One miscalculation in the allocation of Gormanstown College as the accommodation for the apprentices was that it was overlooked that the first night, we were there a Macra Ná Tuaithe Course, containing a large number of nubile young women were still in occupation. You can imagine the night, we the supervisors put in, trying to cope with the resulting situation. We felt we did quite well.

The following members of C.D. VEC staff were involved in the Competitions:

- Mr Martin Gleeson C.E.O (An overall Management Role)
- Mr J.B. Hickey, North Strand, Assistant C.E.O (Meeting team's accommodation etc.)
- Mr Donal O'Dwyer, Principal Bolton Street
- (Management role in the physical running of the competition)
- Mr Jack Barry, Vice Principal, Bolton Street
- (Management role in the physical running of the competition)
- Mr Seamus Rossiter, Bolton Street (Technical Expert in Engineering Trades)

- Mr John Guirke, (Technical Expert in Motor Trades)
- Mr Tom Bridgeman, Bolton Street (Technical Expert Woodworking Trades)
- Mr Maoil Iosa O’Broin, North Strand, (Workshop Supervisor Engineer and provider of cut blanks)
- Mr Peadar Doyle, Ballyfermot, (Workshop Supervisor Engineer and provider of cut blanks)
- Mr James Shortall, Killester, (Workshop Super Wood trades provider of blanks)
- Mr John Griffen, Bolton Street, Workshop Super Moulding and Casting Trades)

Many other teachers and staff of C.D. VEC and other VEC’s involved with apprentice training and practical teachers from most of the C.D. VEC Second Level Schools.