

TriAthly smashes Irish record

By CHRIS FINLAYSON

UP to 600 athletes swam, cycled and ran their way through Athy's waterways and roadways after they signed

up to compete in last Saturday's TriAthly event. The event, which shows the spotlight on many of the town's attractions, also attracted hundreds of specta-

tors from home and abroad, who cheered on the athletes as they competed along the gruelling course.

While a number of locals braved the cold and murky waters of the River Barrow, the overall winner of the first Tegral TriAthly event was Cyrille Mazure from Beauvais in France. The athlete won the race in a new Irish all-comers record of one

hour, 50 minutes, 26 seconds. Mazure smashed the previous record of one hour, 55 minutes set by Brian Campbell back in 2002.

In the women's race, Claire Connor led from the gun, with an 18 minute, 11 second swim, which was faster than all but six men. Elana Maslova exited the water over three and half minutes later, but

set about reducing that lead on the bike. But she was only able to reduce it to three minutes by the start of the run. In the end, Connor still had 33 seconds to spare on the fast-finishing Maslova.

The swim took place in the River Barrow and consisted of 1,200m downstream with a final 300m upstream against the current. The athletes then jumped on their

bikes and headed out the Carlow Road to Maganey. The final leg of the course saw the competitors run along the banks of the River Barrow before finishing under the winners banner at the Courthouse.

The Sprint race consisted of a shorter and less strenuous course. According to Arthur Lynch, who was one of the main organisers of

the event, the aim for Tegral TriAthly was for it to become 'The triathlon of choice for Irish triathletes'. But with 554 confirmed finishers, Tegral TriAthly became the largest triathlon ever held in Ireland, so the organisers may have reached their goal earlier than expected. What next? Maybe the Irish Triathlon Championships in 2008!

