

According to the complete set of results published in CLRG's *Ceim Magazine*, the following *Eastern Canadian* dancers placed at the **1984 CLRG World Irish Dancing Championships** (held at Cork City Hall, Connolly Hall, Savoy Theatre and Opera House in Cork, Ireland from March 25-April 3):

1. Girls 9-11 Clare Casey, Grant School – **22nd Place and Overseas Award**
2. Boys 9-11 Michael McCloskey, McCloskey School – **2nd Place and Overseas Award**
3. Girls 15-17 Karen Garrett, Rince na nGael – **4th Place and Overseas Award**
4. Ladies 17-19 Paula Doherty, Grant School – **8th Place and Overseas Award**
5. Men 17-19 Brian Grant, Grant School – **2nd Place and Overseas Award**
6. Ladies 19+ Kathleen Gregoire, Butler Academy – **9th Place**
7. Ladies 19+ Theresa Gregoire, Butler Academy – **11th Place**

Overseas Award

This award (usually a piece of Irish crystal or a plaque) was awarded to the highest-placing dancer not resident in Ireland and/or the UK for solo events, and to the highest-placing teams not resident in Ireland. This began as the Bord Failte award in 1972 (and was re-branded as the Aer Lingus award in 1974) as a way to guarantee recognition to dancers from all over the world, when the majority of prizes (at least in the early years) remained in Ireland. **NOTE:** The award was never presented to a dancer or team that placed first!

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Toronto Star (1971-2015); Nov 6, 1984; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Toronto Star
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MICHAEL STUPPIAK/TORONTO STAR
Winning style: Michael McCloskey placed second at the World Championships of Irish Dancing last April at age 9.

Fast footwork brings prizes to boy

By Rob Alexander

Sara McCloskey of Mississauga taught her three children Irish dancing so they would remember the traditions of the land where she and her husband, Edmund, grew up.

In April her son Michael, then 9, took the lessons he had learned to the World Championships of Irish Dancing in Cork, Ireland, and gave the judges there something to remember.

The Pierre Laporte School student jiggled and hornpiped his way to a second-place finish, beating 46 other boys from Ireland and England and one from the U.S.

"It felt pretty good," Michael says. "It was unexpected," his mother says. "The adjudicators were awed by the fact that a child from North America could do Irish dancing that well. I think maybe they thought he was Irish while he was dancing."

Although Michael isn't Irish, he has the benefit of having a mother who

was raised in Ireland, where she began dancing when she was 7. She won many county open competitions and the Western Ireland Championships twice.

In Canada, she started the McCloskey School of Irish Dance in 1976. It was there that, four years ago, she began giving her son his first lessons in the 500-year-old tradition. She quickly recognized Michael was becoming her best student.

"He's very talented," she says. "He has very quick feet and there doesn't seem to be any distinction between his right and left feet."

The most remarkable thing about Michael's second place finish at the world championships is his age. Although other boys from North America have won in the past, their success usually doesn't come until they are in their late teens. By that age they have had the experience of competing in many championships.

But this year was only Michael's third trip to Cork. Last year he won the prize for the best dancer from "overseas."

Since April Michael has placed first in virtually every North American competition in which he's taken part. His mother says she actually welcomes second-place finishes such as his showing at Cork because she feels they help keep her son on his toes.

Sara McCloskey says she teaches Michael and his sisters, Deirdre, 15, and Fiona, 6, as a means of reminding them of their heritage.

"I wanted them to be aware of the tradition their parents grew up with," she says.

Despite this, she adds, Michael is still a big fan of another, distinctly North American dancer.

"Michael loves Michael Jackson. He always tries to copy him because he's got got such quick feet," she says.

23WEST / TORONTO STAR, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1984