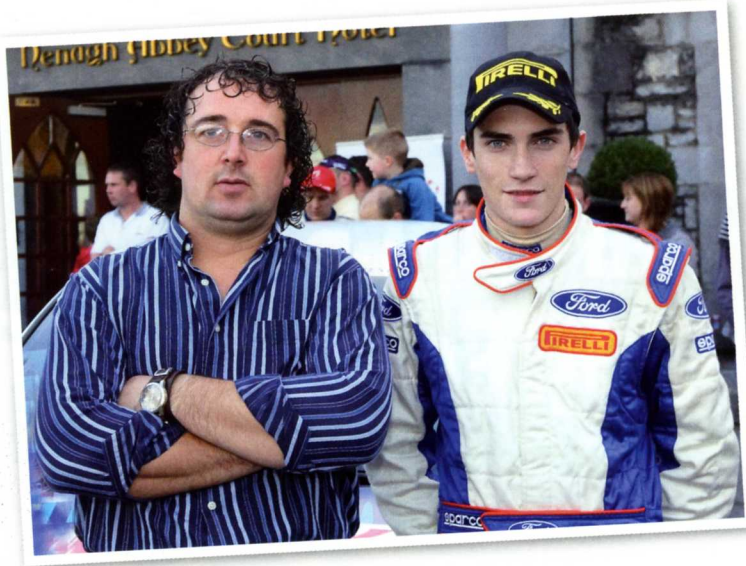


year. It also shows the Waterford driver's talent and the potential of the new Ford Fiesta R2.

The next phase of the NJRC will see the selection of nominees for this year's Billy Coleman Award. The wild card nominations will be made prior to the interview process. This year's National Junior Rally Championship Prize Giving will place on November 7th in the Commins Inn, Cork city.

*Championship registrar John Quill pictured with the 2009 Junior Champion Craig Breen.*



## John O'Connor

**Date of Birth:** 01/11/1987  
**Home Town:** Askeaton, Co.Limerick  
**Occupation:** Apprentice Electrician  
**Road Car:** Citroen Berlingo (to tow my Rallycar!!!)  
**Rally Car:** Ford Escort G3 RWD (1600 16V)  
**Hobbies:** Rallying!!! whether its competing or just helping somebody out, motocross and soccer  
**Sponsors:** Sliverstone tyres, John O'Connor Plant Hire, Opposite lock rally prep, Tom Casey Race Engines.  
**How did you get involved in Rallying:** My father (John snr), has been stuck into rallying since the early 80's. He almost won the national forestry championship back in 94, but he rolled out on the last event!!!  
**Rally Debut:** Circuit of Munster 2006. 54th o/a, 4th in class 10  
**What is your best result to date?** Without a doubt Carlow Stages 2009 Junior Rally. After failing to finish nearly 10 rallies in a row I nearly felt like crying when I finished!! 2nd o/a  
**Why enter the Junior Championship?** Plain and simple, I want to become works driver!

**John's NJRC Season as it unfolded:**  
**Rounds Contested:** Seven (4 Tarmac and 3 Forestry)  
**Point's total:** 20 points  
**Overall Position:** Fourth Overall  
 John was defiantly one to watch on both tarmac and forestry surfaces during the season as he was one of only two drivers to use a rear wheel drive car in the championship. In John case it was his RWD G3 Escort. After failing to finish in the opening forestry rounds it was his home event in Limerick that got him off the mark by gaining six points. He then backed that up by doubling his tally as the championship moved to Carrick on Suir for the Ravens Rock junior rally. John's next outing was the Clare stages where he recorded victory and moved ahead of Vincent McAree into fourth place in the championship standings. His last rally of the season was at the Birr forestry but a damaged gearbox but him out after stage two.

**Best Performance of the Season:** John's best result of the season was his win in Clare. He will say that it only came at the expense of Jonathan Cunningham crashing out but it was well deserved for a driver who has supported the championship all year.



## Jon Cunningham

**Date of Birth:** 2-2-84  
**Home Town:** Galway  
**Occupation:** Shell Fabrication for M-sport  
**Road Car:** (Ireland) Evo 6.5 and (UK) Toyota corolla.  
**Rally Car:** Honda Civic.  
**Hobbies:** Mountain biking, Car Model Collecting, Running and Swimming  
**Sponsors:** Cunningham car sales, Healy plant hire, and my brother Patrick for sponsoring me his car for the year.  
**How did you get involved in Rallying:** I got involved in rallying by my father when he did rallying himself, helping out with the car from a very young age. I started Navigating for my two brothers. Also my uncles and cousins are also involved in rallying as well.  
**Rally Debut:** Kerry Banna beach stages 08.  
**What is your best result to date?** Winning the 2009 Circuit of Munster Junior Rally and Winning the 2009 Cork 20 Junior Rally.  
**Why enter the Junior Championship:** My brothers did this last year and they enjoyed it. I always wanted to do a championship myself so it seemed an excellent place to start me off in rallying, to compete with other young drivers. Also to be in a chance of winning the Billy Coleman award.

**Jonathan's NJRC Season as it unfolded**  
**Rounds Contested:** Eight (5 Tarmac and 3 Forestry)  
**Point's total:** 38  
**Overall Position:** Second Overall  
 Jonathan took two victories, the first coming on round 5 the Circuit of Munster and the second on round twelve the Cork 20 Junior Rally. He was one of only two drivers to contest 8 rounds over the season. For Jonathan the championship probably hinged on the result on round eleven. Going into the event (Clare Stages Junior Rally) Jonathan was standing on thirty six points from five events. There was eight points on offer and if he could seize the opportunity and capture the points he would be able to drop his lowest score and replace it with the Clare result. This would place Jonathan level at the top of the table with Craig Breen. All this turned pear shaped as Jonathan crashed out on the last stage when leading the rally.

**Best Performance of the Season:** Jonathan's best performance was? I put a question there because I must mention two. Round 4: the Cavan Stages, after a double puncture on the opening stage and loosing a lot of time he could have taken the easy option of just driving to the finish of the rally and picked up the points on offer, but he showed some real fighting spirit. Over the second loop of stages he set three fastest stage times and was the only driver to match the pace of the class eleven winner Peter



## Kevin O'Connor

**Date of Birth:** 21/05/1990  
**Home Town:** Askeaton, Co.Limerick  
**Occupation:** Panel Beater  
**Road Car:** 93 Toyota corolla  
**Rally Car:** 1300 205rwd  
**Hobbies:** Nothing but rallying (cant afford to do anything else)  
**Sponsors:** Family funded at the minute  
**How did you get involved in Rallying:** My father and my uncles did rallying years ago so I got stuck in at an early age  
**Rally Debut:** Killarney forestry 2007  
**What is your best result to date:** Winning the 2009 Ravens Rock Junior Rally

**Kevin's NJRC Season as it unfolded:**  
**Rounds Contested:** Five (4 Tarmac and 1 Forestry)  
**Point's total:** 12 points  
**Overall Position:** Sixth Overall  
 Kevin is the second of our rear wheel drive campaigners and is the younger brother of John. Kevin only registered for the championship at his home event the Circuit of Munster Junior Rally, round five of the season after being enticed to get involved by John Quill. He had taken part in the opening forestry events at the start of the year but did not take up the option of registering for points in the NJRC.

When he did put his name in the hat he started with a bang by claiming six points on his home event in Limerick and finishing second overall in the junior rally. Kevin then made the trip to the Ravens Rock junior rally in June and had a great performance in tricky conditions to take victory.  
 For the remainder of the season bad luck plagued the young lad. First on the ALMC where his rally came to an abrupt end when a wheel sheared off his car on stage five. The Cork forestry followed and after making a very quick start and matching the pace of Craig Breen, a stone got dragged in to the engine and pulled off the timing belt on stage three. The Clare Stages junior rally was his last outing of the year. This also ended with a bang over a jump. He had picked up a lot of speed after exiting a square left and was in sixth gear. On landing he damaged his steering rack and nearly lost control but managed to get it together and finished the stage. He knew he would suffer on stage six as it had very long straights. It was in a narrow part as they entered a crest, then a chicane he lost control hitting the balls sustaining a lot of frontal damage putting him out.

**Best Performance of the Season:** Kevin best

