

The 'Chariots of Fire' College Dash, Trinity College Dublin

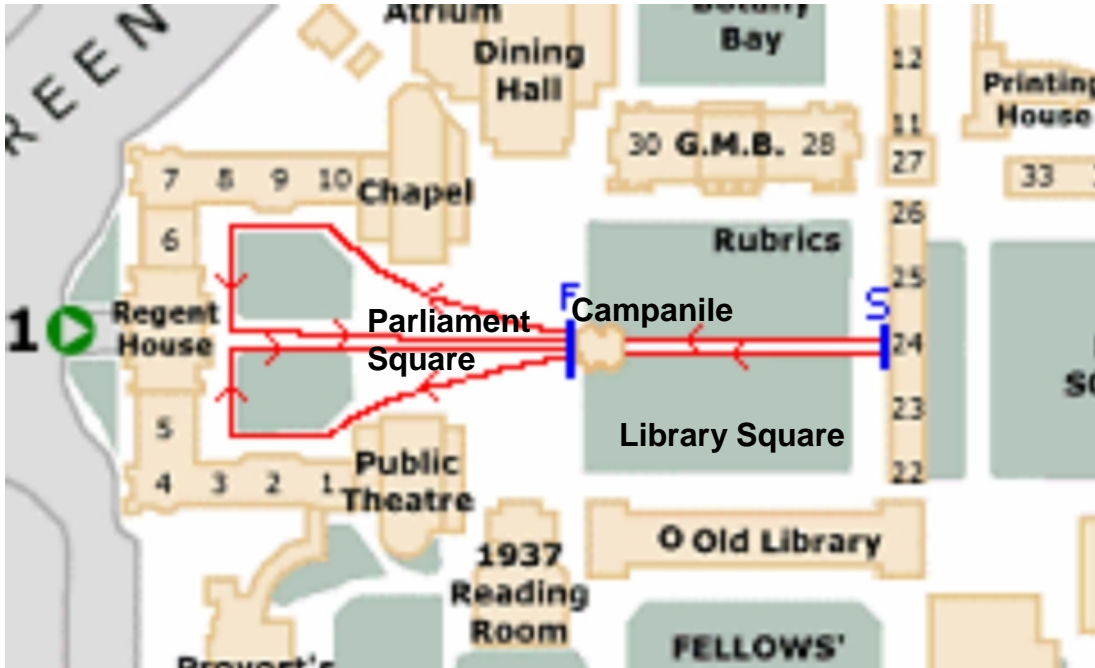
The 'Chariots of Fire' College Dash was established during Trinity Week in 1983. Liam Lysaght (Harriers Captain 1983–84) and Peter Campbell (Athletics Captain 1983–84), both of whom were D.U.H.A.C. committee members in 1982–83, had the idea for the race around Front Square inspired by the movie *'Chariots of Fire'* (David Puttnam, 1981). The inaugural winner was Denis Finnerty (49.6 sec), 2nd was Alan Gilsean and 3rd was Brendan Mullin. No race for women was contested.

The Course



Aerial view Trinity College Dublin showing "Front Square" in which the "College Dash – Chariots of Fire Race" has taken place annually since 1985 [©The Photographic Centre, Audio-Visual and Media Service, Trinity College Dublin].

The 'Chariots of Fire' College Dash takes place in the 'Front Square' area of the College.



Map of the Chariots of Fire Race, Trinity College Dublin



Start of the 'Chariots of Fire' race. Competitors start either side of the central doorway at House 24 of the Rubrics in the background and run up the central path of Library Square.



The Campanile and Library Square viewed from the Rubrics. Competitors in the 'Chariots of Fire' College Dash run up this central path through Library Square, the surface of which is tar macadam, under the Campanile splitting to each side of Parliament Square across the square setts (smooth cobbles).



**The 'Chariots of Fire' race. On running under the Campanile from the start at the Rubrics, competitors split to either side of Parliament square
[Photograph © Frank Miller, The Irish Times]**

The race is run by students in pairs starting at the Rubrics. Each competitor must have one foot in contact with the wall of House 24. The competitors run up the central path of Library Square under the Campanile and then split to take each side of Parliament Square. Sides are drawn by lot.



Panoramic view of Parliament Square from the Campanile, Trinity College Dublin. On the left in the Public Theatre (commonly referred to as the Examination Hall) and on the right is the College Chapel. Straight ahead is Regent House. [© Niaz, 2009]



'Chariots of Fire' College Dash. Competitor running between the corner of the Public Theatre and the lawn outside Houses 1-5.

One athlete runs past the Public Theatre and around the side of the lawn beside houses 1 – 5. The other athlete runs past the College Chapel and around the lawn beside houses 6 – 10. They meet again at Front Arch, Regent House, proceeding up the central path from Regent House across Parliament Square to the finish line at the Campanile.



'Chariots of Fire' race. Rounding the final corner at Regent House, Front Arch, for the straight run to the finish line at the Campanile [Photograph © Frank Miller, The Irish Times]



Competitor's view from Regent House up central path of Parliament Square towards the Campanile, the finish line of the 'Chariots of Fire' College Dash. [© Hetty 51, 2009]



Final sprint to the finish line of the 'Chariots of Fire' dash across the square sets of Parliament square. [Photograph © Frank Miller, The Irish Times]



'Chariots of Fire' race. Competitor approaches the finish line.

The course, except for the initial part through Library Square, is run on stone setts throughout. Each of the heats is started by a shot from a starting pistol and hand-timed. The fastest four men and women from the heats contest semi-finals. The winners of the semi-finals run in the finals. One final is run at 11.50 a.m. and the other at 12 noon.



The Campanile viewed from the Rubrics, Trinity College Dublin

The Campanile Bell

The final event is run at midday, men and women in alternate years, to the toll of the Campanile Bell. The Campanile (bell tower) stands nearly a hundred feet tall and was built in 1853 by Sir Charles Lanyon. The belfry is richly detailed, a cylindrical chamber encircled by Corinthian columns and pierced by tall round-headed openings with cast-iron traceried grilles. The four figures at the base of the belfry, sculpted by Thomas Kirk (1781–1845), represent Divinity (seen holding a cross), Science, Medicine and Law.

Finalists in the 'Chariots of Fire' College Dash start from the Rubrics on the first toll of the Campanile bell at midday and must complete the

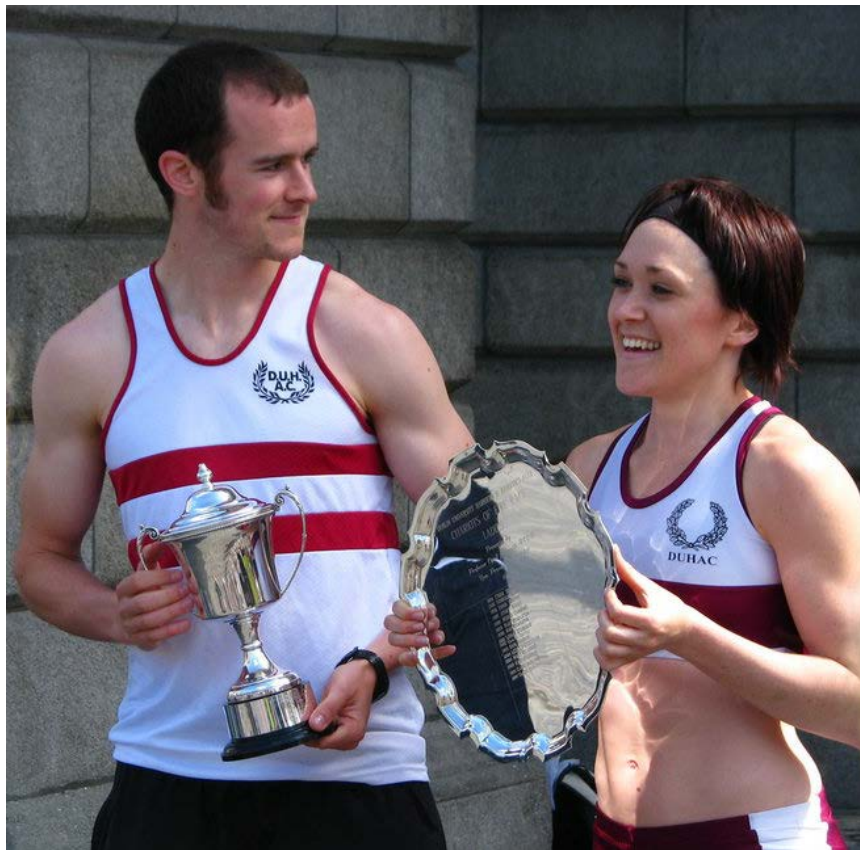
course before the twelfth toll. The intervals between the tolls can be adjusted for the men and women. Men are expected to complete the course in under approximately 41 sec. Women are expected to complete the course in under approximately 45 sec.

Men's Trophy

The D.U.H.A.C. Perpetual Challenge Cup – The College Dash
[Sponsored by Trustee Savings Bank]

Women's Trophy

The D.U.H.A.C. Chariots of Fire Race Plate [Presented by Prof Cyril J Smyth, F.T.C.D., Hon. President]



2008 Winners of the 'Chariots of Fire' College Dash with Trophies: Simon Taggart and Claire McGlynn