

Dare to Believe's OLYMPIC MOVEMENT BREAKS

Active Break Every Day Challenge



Proud title sponsor



Contents

Olympic Movement Breaks Context	3
How this works?	4
Olympic Movement Break Listing	5
Olympic Movement Break Challenge Chart	6
Ireland's Glittering Olympic History	7
Olympics in Numbers Infographic	8
Olympics Values	9

Athlete Profiles

Sarah Lavin	11
Leon Dwyer	12
Dean Clancy	13
Nadia Power	14
Harry McNulty	15
Rhys Mc Clenaghan	16
Ellen Walshe	17
Lucy Mulhall	18
Shane O Donaghue	19
Kellie Harrington	20
Thomas Barr	21
Britney Arendse	22

Quiz	23
Acknowledgements	24



Olympic Movement Breaks

CONTEXT

We heard from many teachers that students need movement breaks during the day when they are full of beans or lacking in energy. Teachers asked us for some video resources to help them find appropriate movement breaks that could be done right in the classroom and help all their students to reset and refocus.

We looked into the promising research that indicates that short active movement breaks are shown to help all students academically, emotionally and of course physically ([source](#)). So we went on a mission to help students to get in their learning zones!

OUR SOLUTION

Our solution was to create 20 fun, but functional, Olympic Movement Breaks. The idea is that teachers and students will take up to 5 minutes to follow one of our Olympians and High-Performance athletes demonstrating exercises and activities that can be done by students of all abilities in the classroom.

The Olympic Movement Breaks include a variety of different sports including athletics, boxing, rugby 7s, hockey, swimming, break dancing and para powerlifting! The Olympic ambassadors gave their own expertise and input into each of their movement breaks and each break includes interesting insights and tips from these world class athletes.

In addition we have created this downloadable resource to enhance your experience using the Olympic Movement Breaks. Below you'll find short [biographies](#) on each athlete and their Olympic sport, [facts](#) about Ireland at Olympics, and a short [quiz](#) on all the content!

We are delighted our Olympic Movement Breaks will support this year's Active Break Everyday Challenge run annually by the Active School Flag Programme.

We hope you enjoy the Olympic Movement Breaks and and this downloadable resource. and we look forward to hearing your thoughts and feedback. Special shout out and thanks to the athletes, teachers and students that were involved in the making of the videos.

Dare to Believe!

Róisín McGettigan-Dumas & Roisin Jones

Co-founders of the Olympic Federation of Ireland's Dare to Believe Olympic School Programme

ABOUT DARE TO BELIEVE

'Dare to Believe', launched in 2019, aims to inspire the country's children to 'dare to believe' in themselves through interacting with and being inspired by Ireland's Olympic and Paralympic athletes. Dare to Believe now boasts 31 world class Irish Olympic and Paralympic ambassadors delivering tailored Olympic Values programmes for primary schools and post-primary students. Since 2019 we have engaged with over 200,000 children in Ireland through various initiatives. Dare to Believe is sponsored by PTSB and the IOC Solidarity Fund.



How this works

- 1 **Download & Print** the Olympic Movement Break Active Break Every Day Challenge Chart and laminate it and hang it up in the classroom. [Download here.](#)
- 2 **Start the Challenge!** On Monday November 13th through to December 8th go to <https://www.daretobelieve.ie/olympic-movement-breaks/> and click on the appropriate video for each day. Check off the video after watching it and keep doing this every day until you finish the challenge chart.
- 3 **Take 5 and Get Moving.** Keep doing the Movement Breaks any time your students need to Take 5 to reset and refocus!
- 4 **Additional Resources.** Learn more about the athletes featured in the videos by reading their [bios](#) and information on their Olympic Sport, [Olympic History](#) and [values](#) along with a fun [Olympic quiz](#) at the end of each week.
- 5 **Share your progress.** Tag us in your class doing some of these movement breaks or send pictures to info@daretobelieve.ie to be in with a chance to win some Team Ireland merchandise.



TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Engage the Active Leaders in the classroom to make sure you are checking off the videos on your challenge chart as you go.
- Set a reminder every day and Take 5 eg.10am
- Get the whole school involved, perhaps there is an announcement on the intercom for everyone to join in.
- Ask students to check in on how they are feeling before and after the movement break.
- After the Active Break Every Day Challenge:
 - Take 5 anytime students need a break and pick a video.
 - Cut up the chart and shuffle them around and randomly pick a video to do



Olympic Movement Break Listing

WEEK	DAY	ATHLETE	SPORT	MOVEMENT BREAK TITLE	MOVEMENT BREAK DESCRIPTION
WEEK 1	Mon	Sarah Lavin	Athletics/ hurdles	Speed Reaction	Test your reaction speed with one the world's fastest sprint hurdlers
	Tue	Leon Dwyer	Dance	Elements of Breaking	Learn the key steps of Break Dance - a new Olympic sport!
	Wed	Dean Clancy	Boxing	Boxing 101	A full 101 of how to box like an Olympian, Dean will teach you all the shots
	Thu	Nadia Power	Athletics MD	Olympic Circuit	Get your heart racing with this fun circuit challenge to piece together the magical word 'Olympics'!
	Fri	Harry McNulty	Rugby Sevens	Amp it up!	Get ready to Amp it up for this 'Team Ireland Chant Movement Break'! It's all about fun and team spirit – Let's go - Team Ireland!

WEEK 2	Mon	Rhys McClenaghan	Gymnastics	Key Gymnastics Moves	Learn some key moves to gymnastics from World Champion Rhys McClenaghan
	Tue	Ellen Walshe	Swimming	Strong Core Strong Swimmer	Get ready to challenge your core like an Olympian
	Wed	Lucy Mulhall	Rugby Sevens	Passing Power	Test your class's coordination with this pencil case passing challenge
	Thu	Shane O'Donoghue	Hockey	Hockey Coordination & Core	Fire up the hand-eye coordination with an Olympic hockey player
	Fri	Nadia Power	Athletics MD	Olympic Trivia Run	It's time to stretch those neurons and lunge into the world of Olympic trivia!

WEEK 3	Mon	Kellie Harrington	Boxing	Box a round with the Olympic Champ	Hop into the ring with Olympic Champion Kellie Harrington. Get those lightning-fast jabs, powerful hooks, and deadly uppercuts ready
	Tue	Thomas Barr	Athletics/ hurdles	Wake Up Wind Up	Athlete Thomas Barr takes you through elements of his professional hurdle warm up
	Wed	Leon Dwyer	Dance	Breaking Routine	Put together a break dancing routine with key moves and style
	Thu	Harry McNulty	Rugby Sevens	Rugby Relay	Put your class through the paces with this Olympic Moto Rugby Relay whole of class challenge - Faster, Higher, Stronger!
	Fri	Ellen Walshe	Swimming	Swim Strokes Medley	Ellen will take us through 4 strokes of swimming in a fun on-land swim medley

WEEK 4	Mon	Britney Arendse	Weight-lifting	Power Building with Books	Paralympian Power Lifter Brittany will bring you through a unique arm workout that turns your favorite school books into muscle-building marvels!
	Tue	Sarah Lavin	Athletics/ hurdles	FlexiFit	Join Sarah as bring you through how to balance strength with flexibility in Sprint Hurdling
	Wed	Shane O'Donoghue	Hockey	Olympic Stretch & Strength Shufflei	Warm up with an OLYMPIC Stretch routine and strengthen those quads with squat shuffles and more
	Thu	Thomas Barr	Athletics/ hurdles	Run an Olympic Final	Thomas takes us from the call-room to the finish line of his Olympic final
	Fri	Lucy Mulhall	Rugby Sevens	Explosive Fitness	This mini power building circuit is worth a "TRY"

Olympic Movement Break Challenge Chart

 [Download Challenge Chart here](#)

OLYMPIC MOVEMENT BREAKS

Active Break Every Day Challenge

Make sure to tick each box as you complete the movement breaks.

	Week One	Week Two	Week Three	Week Four
MONDAY	<p>Sarah Lavin</p>  <p>Speed Reaction</p>	<p>Rhys McClenaghan</p>  <p>Key Gymnastics Moves</p>	<p>Kellie Harrington</p>  <p>Box A Round With The Olympic Champ</p>	<p>Britney Arendse</p>  <p>Power Building With Books</p>
TUESDAY	<p>Leon Dwyer</p>  <p>Elements Of Breaking</p>	<p>Ellen Walshe</p>  <p>Strong Core Strong Swimmer</p>	<p>Thomas Barr</p>  <p>Wake Up Wind Up</p>	<p>Sarah Lavin</p>  <p>FlexiFit</p>
WEDNESDAY	<p>Dean Clancy</p>  <p>Boxing 101</p>	<p>Lucy Mulhall</p>  <p>Passing Power</p>	<p>Leon Dwyer</p>  <p>Breaking Routine</p>	<p>Shane O'Donoghue</p>  <p>Olympic Stretch & Strength Shuffle</p>
THURSDAY	<p>Nadia Power</p>  <p>Olympic Circuit</p>	<p>Shane O'Donoghue</p>  <p>Hockey Coordination & Core</p>	<p>Harry McNulty</p>  <p>Rugby Relay</p>	<p>Thomas Barr</p>  <p>Run An Olympic Final</p>
FRIDAY	<p>Harry McNulty</p>  <p>Amp It Up!</p>	<p>Nadia Power</p>  <p>Olympic Trivia Run</p>	<p>Ellen Walshe</p>  <p>Swim Strokes Medley</p>	<p>Lucy Mulhall</p>  <p>Explosive Fitness</p>



Ireland's 100 Years of Glittering Olympic History

- Ireland has competed at every Summer Olympic Games since 1924 and at the Winter Olympics since 1992
- Ireland's first two Olympic medals, in Paris 1924, were actually for art and poetry which were then Olympic events. Jack Butler Yeats won silver in 'Mixed Art' for his painting 'The Liffey Swim' which you can see in the National Gallery in Dublin
- Since those early 'culture' medals, **Ireland has won 35 medals** in Summer Games. The Olympic Games return to Paris in 2024, marking 100 years since Ireland's first medals in the same city



Wicklow runner Ronnie Delany won 1500m gold in Melbourne in 1956



Katie Taylor, from Bray, won light-weight gold in London 2012, the first time the Olympic Games included female boxers

- In those 100 years only nine Irish people have ever achieved sports' ultimate accolade of 'Olympic Champion'
- Cork doctor Pat O'Callaghan won the first of Ireland's 11 gold medals, at hammer throwing, in Amsterdam in 1928
- Best friends O'Callaghan and 400m hurdler Bob Tisdall both struck gold in Los Angeles (USA) in 1932 within ten minutes of each other
- It was a full 36 years before the next Irish Olympic champion, welterweight boxer Michael Carruth in Barcelona in 1992
- Boxer Kellie Harrington, from Dublin's inner city, was crowned Olympic champion at the same weight (60kg) in Tokyo 2020

- They continued Irish boxers' remarkable Olympic tradition of winning over half (18) of Ireland's 35 Olympic medals to date
- Belfast boxing has produced ten medals in the Irish tally, with Paddy Barnes winning a bronze medal in both Beijing 2008 and London 2012.
- In Tokyo 2020, Fintan McCarthy teamed up with Paul O'Donovan in the lightweight double sculls, with the crew winning gold and becoming Olympic Champions.



Rio 2016 marked Ireland's first ever medals in rowing, a silver in lightweight double sculls from Skibbereen brothers Gary and Paul O'Donovan



Olympics in Numbers

100



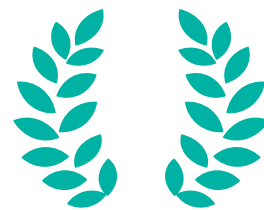
Number of years since Ireland's first Olympic medals, won for art and poetry which were actually Olympic events back in 1924

11



Number of Olympic gold medals that Ireland has won in past 100 years

9



Only nine Irish athletes have ever won the coveted title of 'Olympic champion'

35

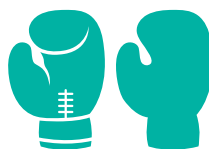
Total number of medals Ireland has won in Olympic Games since 1924: 11 gold, 10 silver and 14 bronze

11

10

14

18



Number of Olympic medals won by Irish boxers, Ireland's most successful Olympic sport

3

Tokyo 2020 marked the first time Ireland ever qualified in the sports of women's hockey, men's Sevens Rugby and Taekwondo

4

Olympic Games come around every four years but Tokyo 2020 and Paris 2024 are exceptions. Tokyo was delayed a year because of COVID so took place in 2021, leaving just a three-year gap to Paris



11,000

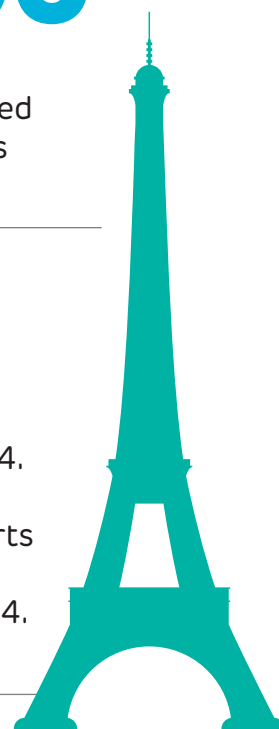
Number of athletes worldwide who qualified for the Tokyo Olympics in 2021

116

Size of Team Ireland named before Tokyo 2020. It was our biggest team ever and featured 55 women and 61 men. Interestingly many of the sports used their reserves, so after the Games 120 athletes could call themselves Olympians.

32

Number of sports in Paris 2024. Skateboarding, surfing and climbing became Olympic sports in Tokyo and breakdancing is the sole new inclusion for 2024.



Olympic Values

THE 'DARE TO BELIEVE' PHILOSOPHY AND HOW IT GUIDES OLYMPIC MOVEMENT BREAKS

The original values of Olympism, as expressed in the first Olympic Charter in 1908, were to 'encourage effort', 'preserve human dignity' and 'develop harmony'.

The Olympic and Paralympic movements now describe their core values as the joy and courage of effort, respect for others, fair play, pursuit of excellence, mind/body balance and equality of opportunity for all.

These principles are equally reflected in our Dare To Be philosophy which is that:

- Olympians and Paralympians are made, not born.
- Sport is for all because everyone can benefit from healthy minds and bodies.
- Sport has the power to change the world. Our athletes, as positive role models, can help lead that change.
- Olympism and Paralympism are not just about sport. They are about art, culture and important values like teamwork and community spirit.
- Children can be motivated to 'Dare To Believe', to follow their dreams and goals, not just in sport but in life.
- Sport is a vehicle for teaching important values such as respect, friendship, excellence, the joy of effort, courage and fair play.
- Sport has a huge role in the Sustainable Development Goals and sport participation is shown to have a positive effect on personal, social and societal wellbeing.



Athlete Profiles

Sarah Lavin	11
Leon Dwyer	12
Dean Clancy	13
Nadia Power	14
Harry McNulty	15
Rhys Mc Clenaghan	16
Ellen Walshe	17
Lucy Mulhall	18
Shane O Donaghue	19
Kellie Harrington	20
Thomas Barr	21
Britney Arendse	22

DARE TO BELIEVE



Sarah Lavin

Sarah was born in Limerick in 1994 and played lots of different sports in her youth. But after trying athletics at the age of 7 with Emerald AC she really loved the feeling of running fast and racing others, especially over the hurdles. She is a qualified physiotherapist but now runs full time and, with her coach Noelle Morrissey, travels all over the world to compete. After years of training and a lot of dedication she qualified for her first Olympics in 2022 and is now running the fastest times of her life. In 2023 she won bronze at the European Games and her 12:62 run in the semi-final of World Championships finally broke the Irish 100mH record she had been chasing for years. Sarah also finished 2023 by setting a new national 100m record on the flat (11:27) making her, officially, the fastest Irish woman in history!



HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ **2011** – Bronze medallist at European Youth Olympics
- ★ **2013** – Silver medallist at European Junior Championships
- ★ **2021** – Finally breaks the magic 13-mark and qualifies for first Olympic Games.
- ★ **2022** – Fifth in the European (outdoors) final and 7th in World Indoor final.
- ★ **2023** – European Indoor finalist, bronze medallist at European Games, World Championship semi-finalist in new Irish record (12:62) and also sets new Irish 100m record (11:27).



Hometown: Lisnagry, Limerick

Primary School: Lisnagry NS

Current Club: Emerald Athletics Club

Fun Fact: Sarah's dog, a Cavapoo, is named 'Olympus' thanks to her qualifying for the Tokyo Olympics in 2020 though everyone now calls him 'Olly'.

Sarah's Sport: Athletics – 100m Hurdles



The 100m hurdles race is also sometimes called 'sprint hurdles' and is an event for women. The equivalent men's event is over 110m and higher hurdles. 100m hurdles are 33 inches (83.8 cm) high. The first one is placed 13m from the start line and each of the next nine are set at 8.5m intervals before a final flat 10.5m to the finish.

To maintain maximum speed athletes will usually use the same stride pattern and lead leg, aiming to get over the hurdles as low and fast as possible so they don't 'jump' them and lose speed while in the air. Up until 1935 you were actually disqualified if you knocked three hurdles but that no longer applies.

It doesn't matter how many you hit but, ideally, you want to touch none (a 'clean run') because even the slightest clip slows you down. The hurdles are very light and designed, by weight, to always fall forwards to minimise injury.

The current world record is 12.12 seconds.

Leon Dwyer

Leon, born in Dublin in August 1997, played lots of sports like football, karate and boxing yet says that "nothing compares to breaking in my opinion. You have to use your whole body, it's really intense." He comes from a family of dancers. His grandfather was a body-popper and his mum a ballet teacher. Breakers need to have great flexibility, strength and acrobatic skills as well as good musicality to adapt their moves to the music but Leon says it is also about your mind and how you use it to overcome your opponent in competition. "You have to feed off the energy of the person that you are against. It's like a conversation. If they do a move you have to do it better. You really have to be mentally ready for it and really prepared." Leon has won competitions at home and abroad and also teaches breaking. Now his dream is to qualify for Paris 2024. "I didn't expect anything like this to happen in my lifetime. I grew up doing breaking for the fun and the culture. Being in the Olympics is massive."



Hometown: Newcastle, Co Dublin

Primary School: St Finian's Newcastle

Current Club: Primal Instinct UK

Fun Fact: Leon uses yoga as part of his training. He says yoga, which is about controlling and balancing the body in a series of poses, "basically a slow version of breaking."



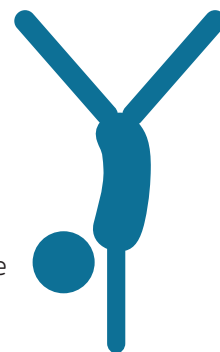
Leon's Sport: Break Dancing

Breaking originally started as a dance style in America in the 1970s and it is characterised by very acrobatic movements and complicated footwork. It's called 'breaking' because you dance to the 'break' in the music and when the music breaks or stops you freeze. Competitors are called B-girls and B-boys and the 'B' stands for Beat.

There are three elements to breaking. 'Top rock' refers to all moves that are performed while standing up - generally a combination of stylish hand movements and footwork - whereas 'freeze' is when the breaker comes to a standstill in an unusual position (on their head or hands) during their routine.

The highlight of the performance is usually the 'down rock'; all the moves done on the floor which include spins, footwork, transitions and power moves like spinning on hands, elbows, back, head or shoulders. One of these moves - the air 'flare' - is very similar to what Ireland's top gymnast Rhys McClenaghan does on the pommel horse, which shows just how strong and agile breakers have to be. Breakers compete against each other in head-to-head 'battles', marked by judges, and routines last from 45 seconds to a minute long. They usually don't know the music beforehand so have to adapt and improvise to it.

Breaking first made its competitive appearance on the Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires in 2018 and now, for the first time, is being included in the Summer Olympics in Paris 2024.



Dean Clancy

Dean, born in Sligo in 2001, won seven successive Irish underage titles from 2013 and won two European Junior/Youth silver medals before he represented Ireland in the Youth Olympics in Argentina in 2018. In 2019, just four weeks after his 18th birthday, he won his first Irish senior title. Winning a European U22 title in 2021 came next and qualified him for the 2022 European Games which were an Olympic qualifier. Dean clinched his Olympic spot for Paris by beating an Italian in the Men's 63.5kg (lightweight) quarter-final and went on to win a bronze medal. Dean says his dad Jason "has coached and guided me on this journey and shaped me into the boxer I am today,". He has put his college studies on hold to train fulltime for Paris 2024 and, every Tuesday, gets on a train at 6:30am to go to Dublin to join the national squad. Dean performs particularly well under the pressure of big competitions and says that's because "I just enjoy boxing. When I'm out there and I'm enjoying it I'm a great tournament boxer."



HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ **2017** - European Junior Silver medallist
- ★ **2018** - European Youth silver and a Youth Olympics semi-finalist
- ★ **2019** - Wins his first Irish senior title
- ★ **2021** - European U22 champion
- ★ **2022** - Bronze medallist at the European Games which also qualified him for Paris 2024

Hometown: Sligo Town

Primary School: St Edwards NS, Sligo

Current Club: Sean McDermott BC, Manorhamilton

Fun Fact: Dean is a talented artist. He got high marks in Art in his Leaving Cert and likes to paint portraits and still life, a passion he inherited from his grandfather who was an artist.



Dean's Sport: Boxing

Boxing is a sport in which two people try to land punches on each other while avoiding getting hit themselves. To win you need quick hands, fast feet and courage. A boxing competition is called a match, a fight, or a bout and in the Olympics they last for three rounds of three minutes.

Boxing is scored by a number of judges who give points for most punches landed and also for being dominant and tactically superior.

Amateur boxers wear padded gloves, head-gear and a mouth guard for protection and, for the same reason, only fight against someone who is roughly the same weight as them. In Paris 2024 there will be seven weight classes for men and six for women.

A boxer wins a match by scoring more points or by getting a knockout ('KO') or a technical knockout ('TKO'). A knockout is when one boxer knocks their opponent down and they do not stand up within 10 seconds. The referee can declare a 'technical knockout' if they think a weakened or injured boxer is no longer able to defend themselves.



Nadia Power

Nadia, born in January 1998, grew up in Templeogue, Dublin and began athletics at eight years of age in her local club, starting in sprints before moving up to middle distances (800m and 1500m). She played camogie for 10 years but eventually concentrated on running because she always dreamed about making the Olympics Games. 2019 was her breakthrough as she broke lots of Irish records and won a bronze medal at the European U23 Championships. She qualified for the Tokyo Olympics while completing a degree in marketing at DCU and now does graphic design. Nadia says all girls and boys should find a sport they love because "there is nothing as good as the feeling of setting a goal, working for it and achieving it. It is also a great way to make friends and step out of your comfort zone."



HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ **2017** - Ran a five-second 1500m personal best to qualify for World Youth Championships
- ★ **2017** - Ran a 1500m personal best to qualify for the European Junior (U20) final
- ★ **2019** - 800m bronze medallist at European U23 Championships
- ★ **2020** - Won her first Irish senior title
- ★ **2021** - Set a new Irish indoor 800m record and competed in her first Olympic Games

Hometown: Templeogue

Primary School: Gaelscoil Mologa, Harolds Cross

Current Club: Dublin City Harriers

Fun Fact: In camogie Nadia won two Feile (U14 and U16) titles with her club St Judes and made the Dublin Development panel.

Nadia's Sport: Athletics, Middle Distance Running

Middle-distance races are any that last longer than one lap (400m) and shorter than 3000m. Most raced are the 800m (two laps), 1500m (three and $\frac{3}{4}$ laps) and Mile (four laps) but there is no Mile event in the Olympic Games. To be good at middle-distance you need to have endurance fitness but also a good 'kick', to sprint to the finish line, and tactical awareness.

A bell is sounded to signal that there is one lap to go and, because it is medium paced, the 800m and 1500m can look easy but they are actually very difficult tactically, like a game of cat and mouse. To be well positioned for the final sprint you need to stay close to the leaders, try to take the most direct route (straight, not wide) yet avoid getting 'boxed in' on the kerb.

With over a dozen or more athletes in an 800/1500m race it can get very crowded. Runners often get accidentally tripped or shouldered so middle distance runners have to be very smart and mentally alert. They, literally, have to think on their feet!



Harry McNulty

Harry was born in 1993 and his family moved around a lot when he was little due to his parents' work. He was born in Bahrain and lived in London and New York but settled in Ireland after coming to boarding school in Tipperary when he was 14. He didn't make his school's top team until he was in fifth year yet hasn't look back since and is now Irish Sevens captain. He played 15s for Munster underage and was playing club rugby in America when recruited to play Sevens for Ireland in 2015. He loves Sevens because players are always in the thick of the non-stop action. Harry has a degree in food science and really loves photography and wildlife which he explores on his many travels. He has already visited 65 different countries!



HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ **2011** – Wins a Munster Schools Cup with Rockwell College
- ★ **2015** – Joins Ireland's first ever men's Sevens team
- ★ **2019** – Ireland win a World Series Qualifier in Hong Kong to join Sevens' top tier
- ★ **2022** – Beat France 28-19 in a qualifying tournament in Monaco to make first Olympic Games
- ★ **2022** – Beat Kenya and South Korea at Olympics but miss a quarter-final spot on points difference
- ★ **2023** – Harry captains Ireland to beat England 26-12 to win the European Games and qualify for Paris

Hometown: xxx

Primary School: Rockwell College

Current Club: Ireland Sevens

Fun Fact: Harry always puts his left item of clothing on first for good luck! That means his left sock before his right sock and his left boot before his right boot.



Harry's Sport: Rugby Sevens

Rugby 'Sevens' is called that because it is played by seven players a-side compared to the usual 15. That leaves much more open space on the pitch so Sevens players not only have to be strong but be really fast to score and defend well.

The scoring and rules are almost the same as XV's rugby. You can only pass the ball sideways or backwards (never forwards) and you score tries (worth five points) and kick conversions (two points) and penalties (three points) but the scrums and line outs are contested by only three players per side. Rugby games normally last for 80 minutes but Sevens is so fast and furious that games only last 14 minutes long, seven minutes per half. That's why Sevens competitions are usually played in a 'blitz' format with multiple games in one day.

Sevens' equivalent of the Six Nations is its 'World Series' which involves tournaments as far apart as New Zealand and Hong Kong to Los Angeles and Vancouver. So Sevens' players do a lot of travelling!



Rhys Mc Clenaghan

Rhys, born in 1999 and from Newtownards, Co Down, was an extremely active child and taught himself to do a backflip on the trampoline in his garden before he even went to gymnastics classes at his local sports centre. By the age of 9 he was training over 24 hours a-week and his career really took off when he joined forces with coach Luke Carson. In 2016 he won Ireland's first ever major gymnastics medal (silver at European Juniors). Now he is a two-time World Champion, an Olympic finalist and one of the most popular gymnasts in the world. Rhys needed surgery on his shoulder in 2018 yet less than a year later became the first Irish gymnast to reach the final of a World Championships and won bronze. He says: "What I love most is that gymnastics is now my job and I get to travel all over the world having fun with my teammates and all the other gymnasts. That's so awesome!"



HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ **2016** - Silver medal at European Juniors
- ★ **2018** - European and Commonwealth Games Champion
- ★ **2019** - World Championship bronze
- ★ **2020** - 7th in Olympic Final
- ★ **2022 & 2023** - World Pommel Horse Champion

Hometown: Newtownards, Co Down

Primary School: Castle Gardens PS.

Current Club: Origins Gym Club

Fun Fact: Rhys achieved a lifelong ambition of making it into the Guinness Book of World Records in 2022 by doing 42 'Russian circles' on the pommel horse in one minute in aid of a mental health charity.

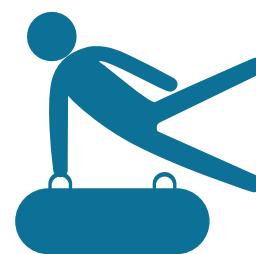


Rhys's Sport: Gymnastics (Pommel Horse)

In gymnastics athletes perform short acrobatic routines on different apparatus and are scored by a group of judges on the difficulty, accuracy and visually pleasing quality of their performance.

Male gymnasts can compete in six separate apparatus – floor, pommel horse, rings, vault, parallel bars and horizontal bar. Ireland's reigning world champion Rhys McClenaghan specialises in pommel. In pommel the gymnast travels along the top of the 'horse' using his hands only, aiming to do a routine of swings and spins with good speed and form (straight legs and pointed toes) before a perfect dismount.

Marks are automatically lost if there are obvious pauses and stops in the routine, or if any part of the gymnast's body brushes against the apparatus. Judges score the routines on degree of difficulty (the D mark) and execution (the E mark). These are combined to give the total score. There is no 'perfect' or 'maximum' score but anything from 14 upwards is a really good score and 15+ excellent. It's worth noting that Rhys scored 15.1 to secure his second world title.



Ellen Walshe



Ellen Walshe, who was born in Dublin in 2001, played a number of sports growing up but focused on swimming from the age of 10. She says it wasn't until she was 16 that she realised her own potential and began to dream of becoming an Olympian. She was only 18 when she became the first Irishwoman to break the one-minute barrier for 100m Butterfly and only 20 when she competed in the Tokyo Olympics in 100m butterfly and 200m Individual Medley (IM). Ellen is good at all strokes but especially good at butterfly and she also swims relays for Ireland. She won three medals (two golds) at the European U23s in 2023 and guaranteed herself a spot at the 2024 Olympics in Paris by shattering the Irish 200m IM record at the 2023 World Championships where she missed the final by just one place. Ellen says "Once I achieve something, it's 'what can I do next?'"

HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ **2015** – Silver medallist at European Youth Olympics
- ★ **2017** – Gold medallist at World School Games.
- ★ **2021** – Silver medallist in 400m IM at World Championships.
- ★ **2021** – Competed in first Olympic Games.
- ★ **2023** – Gold in 200m and 400m IM and one bronze at the European U23 Championships



Hometown: Templeogue, Dublin

Primary School: Presentation Primary, Terenure.

Current Club: Templeogue SC.

Fun Fact: In the 1940s breaststroke swimmers discovered that they could go faster by bringing both arms forward over their heads. This was ruled illegal but gave birth to the official butterfly stroke in 1952.

Ellen's Sport: Swimming (Butterfly and Melay)

Olympic swimmers compete, using four different strokes (Freestyle, Backstroke, Breaststroke and Butterfly) in a 50-metre pool and the fastest wins. Races in three of those strokes start with a dive but one doesn't – can you guess which and why not?

Freestyle is the most popular stroke and, in the Olympics, is raced at distances of 50 metres 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m and 1500m. Freestyle is the only stroke that has a 50m sprint (often called the 'splash and dash') in the Olympics. All the others are raced over 100m (two lengths) and 200m (four lengths) but individual swimmers can also compete in a event that combines all four strokes and this is called the Individual Medley (IM), which is raced over 200m and 400m.

Those who compete in Individual Medley are allrounders who are really good at all four strokes and they have to swim them in a specific order - butterfly first, then backstroke, then breaststroke and freestyle to finish.



Lucy Mulhall

Lucy, born in September 1993, grew up on a farm in Wicklow and wanted to be either a footballer or a vet when she was little. She was first a gaelic football star; topscorer and Player of the Match for Wicklow when they won the 2011 All-Ireland Junior football final. Three years later, while studying science in Trinity College, she got an email inviting her to try out for the national Sevens rugby team and hasn't looked back since. Her switch to rugby coincided with Rugby Sevens becoming an Olympic sport in 2016.

As team captain she has led Ireland's battle for Olympic qualification for nine whole years. They missed out narrowly in Rio 2016 and Tokyo 2020 yet never gave up their dream. They finally made history by becoming the first Irish women's team to qualify by finishing fifth overall in the World Series tournament in Toulouse in May 2023. "We just always want to get better and better and put Sevens rugby on the map," Lucy says.



HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ **2015** - 2nd in tournament in UCD qualified them to the top tier 'World Series'
- ★ **2017** - Broke into World Series top 10, finishing 9th overall with wins over Fiji, England & France
- ★ **2023** - 5th in the World Series and clinched first ever Olympic qualification
Lucy has played 180 times for Ireland and is the team's second highest scorer with 673 points so far



Hometown: Tinahely, Co Wicklow

Primary School: Crossbridge NS

Current Club: Ireland Sevens Team.

Fun Fact: Lucy's guilty pleasure is watching the 'Great British Bake-Off' on TV. She is also a bit obsessed with porridge.

Lucy's Sport: Rugby Sevens

Rugby 'Sevens' is called that because it is played by seven players a-side compared to the usual 15. That leaves much more open space on the pitch so Sevens players not only have to be strong but be really fast to score and defend well.

The scoring and rules are almost the same as XV's rugby. You can only pass the ball sideways or backwards (never forwards) and you score tries (worth five points) and kick conversions (two points) and penalties (three points) but the scrums and line outs are contested by only three players per side. Rugby games normally last for 80 minutes but Sevens is so fast and furious that games only last 14 minutes long, seven minutes per half. That's why Sevens competitions are usually played in a 'blitz' format with multiple games in one day.

Sevens' equivalent of the Six Nations is its 'World Series' which involves tournaments as far apart as New Zealand and Hong Kong to Los Angeles and Vancouver. So Sevens' players do a lot of travelling!



Shane O Donaghue

Shane was born in Dublin in the suburbs of Knocklyon in 1992. He played every sport he could from hockey to Gaelic football, hurling to rugby. He started hockey at age 6 and has played for clubs at home and abroad, including professionally in Belgium. He was part of the Irish team that made history by qualifying for the Rio Olympics 2016 and only narrowly missed Tokyo due to losing a penalty shoot-out.

Shane plays midfield, has played over 200 times for Ireland and is especially good at scoring goals and penalty corners. He has a degree in sports psychology and coaching and absolutely loves being part of team sports, giving max effort always and most of all, enjoying everything sport has to offer. He says sport gives you friends and memories for life.

HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ **2015** - European Bronze medallist
- ★ **2016** - 10th in Rio Olympics
- ★ **2018** - Played in Hockey World Cup
- ★ **2023** - Won EuroHockey Div 2 final a a slot in Paris Olympic Qualifier, Jan 2024

Hometown: Knocklyon

Primary School: Scoil Treasa

Current Club: Glennane HC

Fun Fact: Shane is Ireland's highest ever goalscorer. Can you guess how many goals he's scored? (Answer=128)



Shane's Sport: Hockey

Hockey is a stick and ball field game that gets its name from the French word 'hocquet', meaning shepherd's crook, which refers to its hooked stick, the base of which is curved at the back. It is played by 11 a-side and goals are only scored when the ball is struck inside the semi-circle.

The ball is hard (harder than a sliothar) and you have to hit it with the flat face of your stick. If the ball hits the curved back of the hook or any part of the body other than the stick hand, it is a foul though goalkeepers, who wears lots of padding, can use any part of their body to make a save.

Hockey is largely a ground game but the ball can be flicked into the air (called an 'aerial') once it meets strict safety rules. Hockey has penalty 'strokes' (like soccer) but also penalty shoot-outs (to decide draws sometimes) which are really exciting to watch. This is a 1v1 between an attacker and goalkeeper. The attacker gets the ball at the 23m line and has 8 seconds to beat the goalie.

Hockey has three different disciplinary cards. Green is a two-minute suspension, yellow is for five minutes and a red card rules you out of the rest of the game.



Kellie Harrington

Kellie was born in inner city Dublin in 1989 and got into boxing when she was around 15. When she first tried to join her local boxing club Corinthians they wouldn't take girls but she was very persistent and persuaded them to let her train and compete. Kellie loves how boxing gives everyone a clear goal and a plan to help achieve it. She is also a very proud community leader who particularly loves inspiring kids to get involved in sport and believe in themselves.



HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ Reigning Olympic champion at 60kg from Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.
- ★ 2018 World champion at 60kg.
- ★ World silver medallist at 64kg in 2016 and twice a European silver medallist.
- ★ Won 8 Irish senior titles at three different weights.

Hometown: Dublin

Primary School: St Vincent's Girls School in North William St, Dublin 1

Current Club: St Mary's BC, Tallaght

Fun Fact: Kellie has three 'fur babies' who she absolutely adores: Nidge, Macy and Gus.



Kellie's Sport: Boxing



Boxing is a sport in which two people try to land punches on each other while avoiding getting hit themselves. To win you need to skill and courage.

A boxing competition is called a match, a fight, or a bout and in the Olympics they last for three rounds of three minutes. Boxing is scored by a number of judges who give points for most punches landed and also for being dominant and tactically superior.

Amateur boxers wear padded gloves, head-gear and a mouth guard for protection and, for the same reason, only fight against someone who is roughly the same weight as them. In Paris 2024 there will be seven weight classes for men and six for women.

A boxer wins a match by scoring more points or by getting a knockout ('KO') or a technical knockout ('TKO'). A knockout is when one boxer knocks their opponent down and they do not stand up within 10 seconds. The referee can declare a 'technical knockout' if they think a weakened or injured boxer is no longer able to defend themselves.

Thomas Barr

Thomas Barr was born in Waterford in 1992. He was always a lover of the outdoors, tried most sports throughout his youth and stuck with athletics because he made such great friends in his club. It was not until he went to the University of Limerick that he really started to excel, helped by coaches Hayley and Drew Harrison.

Thomas has run for Ireland across the world and is brilliant at producing his best under pressure. He set a new Irish record of 47:97 seconds in the Rio Olympics where he finished fourth, just five hundredths of a second (the blink of an eye) away from a medal. Despite clipping the sixth hurdle, he was fourth in his semi-final at the Tokyo Olympics. Thomas also loves watersports, snowboarding and 'drifting' which is a form of car racing.



HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ **2011** - European Junior (U20) finalist
- ★ **2013** - European U23 finalist
- ★ **2015** - Gold medallist at World University Games
- ★ **2016** - Fourth in the Rio Olympics final
- ★ **2018** - Bronze medallist at European Championships
- ★ **2021** - Olympic semi-finalist

Hometown: Dunmore East, Waterford

Primary School: Killea Boys NS

Current Club: Ferrybank AC

Fun Fact: Thomas is very handy at DIY and when he was little all he wanted to be was a digger driver.

Thomas's Sport: Athletics (400m Hurdles)

The 400m metres hurdles race (400mH) is regarded as one of the toughest races in athletics because you have to sprint a full lap of the track while also clearing 10 hurdles. Athletes keep their strides as long and low as possible because, shortening them to clear a hurdle, slows them down.

The 10 hurdles are 35m apart with a 45m run to the first barrier and a flat 40m finish after the last. Men and women compete at 400m hurdles but the height of the obstacles are different: 76cm (30") for women and 91.5 cm (36") for men.

There is no penalty for hitting or knocking a hurdle but you don't want to touch any of them because that slows you down. The hurdles are very light and designed to always fall forward.

Athletes start in starting blocks in a 'staggered' start and you will be disqualified if you step outside your own lane. The current world record for men's 400m hurdles is 45:94 seconds.



Britney Arendse

Britney was born in South Africa and moved to Ireland when she was five when her dad got a job here. She survived a terrible car accident when she was nine, spent a whole year in hospital afterwards and since then has been a wheelchair user. While playing basketball, when she was 16, someone suggested she might like weightlifting and she has excelled since. Britney competes in the 73kg class and, in only her second competition, set a new world junior record. She was only 21 when she competed at the Tokyo Paralympics, where she lifted a new personal best of 107 kg and was also also an Ireland flag-bearer at the opening ceremony. Britney is a fulltime athlete and clinched her qualifying spot for the Paris Paralympics by finishing fifth at the 2023 World Championships. "I chose powerlifting because I have the strength for it, most of my muscles are in my upper body, but you can do any sport you like. What's most important is to stay fit and healthy and have fun while you're doing it," Britney says.



HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ **2017** – Gold at 73kg at the prestigious Faza Championships.
- ★ **2018** – Junior gold and senior bronze at 67kg at Faza Championships
- ★ **2018** – Set new junior World Record in 73kg category
- ★ **2019** – Broke her own Junior World Record and moved to #8 in World Rankings
- ★ **2021** – Seventh in the Tokyo Paralympics
- ★ **2023** – 5th at World Championships which also qualified her for Paris Paralympics.

Hometown: Mullagh, Co Cavan

Primary School: St Killian's, Mullagh Co Cavan

Current Club: Irish Wheelchair Sport

Fun Fact: Britney is a huge music fan, especially of Billie Eilish fan, and cried when she saw her perform live in the 3Arena in Dublin.



Britney's Sport: Powerlifting

Powerlifting is a strength sport that consists of lifting the heaviest weight that you can. Athletes compete in weight classes against people who are of a similar size so it is fair to everyone. The weights are fixed at either ends of a bar and there are three different kinds of lifts: squat, bench press and deadlift.

Paralympic athletes often use ropes and attachments to help them lift weights in training but in Para-Powerlifting there is only one kind of competition lift - the bench press. Competitors lie on their back on a bench, lower the bar to their chest, hold it motionless and then press it upwards. They have to lock out their elbows and hold it up for a few seconds, until they get three green lights. They get three lifts in each competition. There are 10 Para-lifting weight categories, from 41kilos up to 86kg+

Powerlifting is one of Paralympics' fastest growing sports in terms and is now practised by athletes in nearly 100 countries. It is not unusual to see a competitor lift more than three times their own body weight.



TAKE THE QUIZ!



Test your class to see if they have been watching these Olympic Movement Breaks carefully and take our quiz at the end of each week.

WEEK

1

1. What event is Sarah Lavin the Irish record holder in?
2. Name one element of break dancing.
3. What boxing shot is like hugging a tree?
4. What sport is Olympian Nadia Power from?
5. How many athletes does the Mullingar ETNS Team Ireland chant refer to?

▼
[TAKE THE WEEK 1 QUIZ ONLINE](#)

WEEK

2

1. What gymnastic event is Rhys McClenaghan double World and European champion in?
2. What common party object does Ellen Walshe refer to when doing her breathing exercises?
3. What skill is needed to ace the Passing Power challenge: Focus b) coordination c)communication d)all of the above
4. True or False: Olympic hockey player Shane O'Donoghue is the top goal scorer for Ireland for all sports.
5. How many medals has Ireland won at the Olympics so far ?

▼
[TAKE THE WEEK 2 QUIZ ONLINE](#)

WEEK

3

1. Where is Olympic champion Kellie Harrington from and what sport does she play?
2. Does Olympic hurdler Thomas Barr prefer running fast or slow?
3. True or False: Is breaking dancing an Olympic Sport
4. What does the Olympic motto "citius, altius, fortius, communiter" mean?
5. What are the 4 strokes that World Silver medallist Eillen Walsh swims in the 200 individual medley relay?

▼
[TAKE THE WEEK 3 QUIZ ONLINE](#)

WEEK

4

1. What animal weighs the same as the weight Para powerlifter Britney Arendse can lift?
2. What animal weighs the same as the weight Olympic sprint Hurdler Sarah Lavin can squat?
3. True or False: Historical records tell us that hockey-like games were played by the ancient Greeks, Romans and Aztecs. Bonus Q: Hockey has similarities to what traditional Gaelic sport?
4. What place did Thomas Barr finish at the Rio Olympic Games in the 400m Hurdles?
5. Who is the captain of the Women's Rugby 7's team?

▼
[TAKE THE WEEK 4 QUIZ ONLINE](#)

Answers:

WEEK 1: 100m hurdles; Top rock, drop, freeze; Hook; Athletics; 9 athletes

WEEK 2: Pommel horse; Balloon; All of the above; True; 35

WEEK 3: Dublin & boxing; Fast; True; Faster, higher, stronger, together; Butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke & front crawl.

WEEK 4: Panda; Bottlenose dolphin, True (bonus: hurling), 4th, Lucy Mulhall.

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Students (A-Z)

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Cezar Sagatovivi	Grace Fennelly	Niamh Jones
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Emily Creevy	Leul Gebrehiwot	

Olympians (A-Z)

Britney Arendse
 Dean Clancy
 Ellen Walshe
 Harry McNulty
 Kellie Harrington
 Leon Dwyer
 Lucy Mulhall
 Nadia Power
 Rhys McClenaghan
 Sarah Lavin
 Shane O'Donoghue
 Thomas Barr





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