

STRATEGIC PILLAR 6

TEAM



OLYMPIC SPORTS AWARDS EVENING

The inaugural 'Team Ireland Olympic Sport Awards', a star-studded evening that brought together Ireland's best athletes launched on 6 December. Those shaping the Olympic sporting journey swapped their training kit for ball gowns and tuxedos to celebrate an exceptional year in sport.

Through 10 awards, their achievements were honoured in front of more than 500 guests to celebrate a year filled with European and international championships highlighted by countless personal bests, qualification battles, and standout moments on the world stage.

This upgrade to our previous Awards format hosted since 2022 was driven by a desire to highlight the importance of High-Performance sport to Ireland's national identity and to provide a strong and enduring promotional platform for Irish Olympic sports.

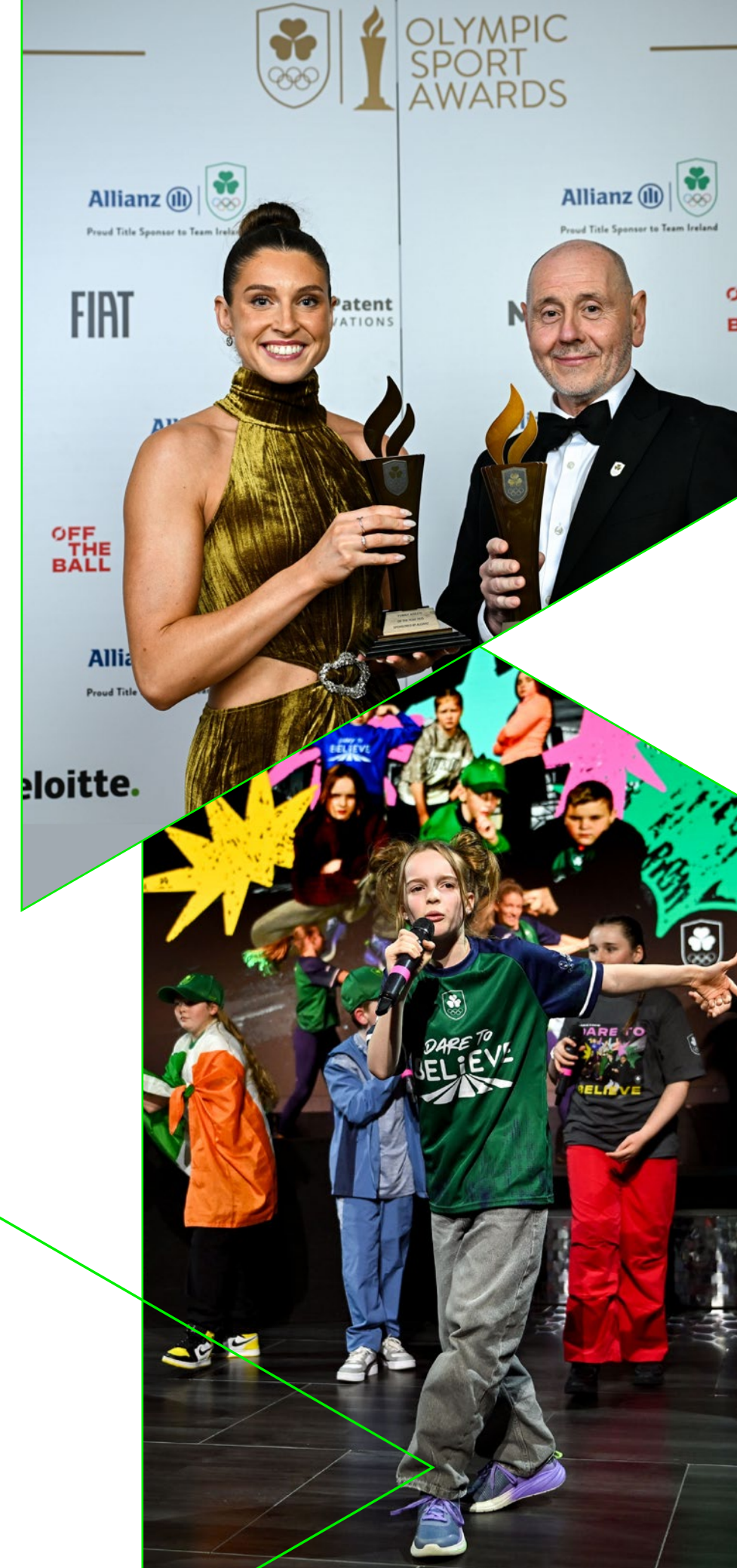
During the lead up, an independent Jury panel was appointed, and results were determined by a public vote which drew terrific response from the Irish sporting community who cast in excess of 42,300 votes across eight of the ten categories.

The addition of Off the Ball as official media partner to the Team Ireland Olympic Sport Awards, enhanced public engagement, support and coverage before and during the event.

On the night, each winner received the 'Olly', the newly designed Olympic Sport Award trophy, the design of which was inspired by the Olympic torch. The prestigious 'President's Award' was then awarded posthumously to Maeve Kyle, who passed away earlier in 2025. Maeve was the first female to represent Ireland in the sport of Athletics, in so doing inspiring countless Irish women to follow. A special video message from Kirsty Coventry, the first female President of the IOC, was played, which acknowledged the achievements of Maeve, a pioneer of women's sport. Entertainment on the night commenced with a powerful spoken word from poet, Stephen James Smith, who had penned a dedication to Irish Olympians called 'From Torch to Tally'. That was followed by a very special performance by the 'Kabin Crew' Rap team, which included their new hit song 'Dare to Believe'.

Special attendees included Ireland's year 2000 Sydney Games Olympians, celebrating a quarter century since their participation, as well as the 2025 European Youth Olympic Festival medallists. A highlight of the night was a salute to the athletes preparing for the Winter Olympic Games in Milano Cortina held in February 2026.

The 2025 Team Ireland Olympic Sport Awards celebrated not only podiums and moments, but the dedication, resilience and spirit that drive Irish athletes daily.





WINNERS

Female Athlete of the Year, sponsored by Allianz

Winner: Kate O'Connor (Athletics)

Nominees: Aoife O'Rourke (Boxing); Fiona Murtagh (Rowing); Lara Gillespie (Cycling)

Male Athlete of the Year, sponsored by Allianz

Winner: Rory McIlroy (Golf)

Nominees: Ben Healy (Cycling); Cian McPhillips (Athletics); Fintan McCarthy (Rowing)

Rising Star, sponsored by Sport Ireland

Winner: Eve McMahon (Sailing)

Nominees: John Shortt (Swimming); Patsy Joyce (Boxing)

Team of the Year, sponsored by Flogas

Winner: Fintan McCarthy & Philip Doyle (Rowing)

Nominees: Senior Eventing Team (Equestrian); Men's 3x3 Basketball Team

Coach of the Year, sponsored by Key Patent Innovations

Winner: Dominic Casey (Rowing)

Nominees: John Szaraneck (Swimming); Michael O'Connor (Athletics)

Olympic Sporting Moment of the Year, sponsored by Fiat

Winner: Kate O'Connor's World Championships silver medal

Nominees: Rory McIlroy's Masters triumph; Ben Healy in the yellow jersey at the Tour de France

High Performance Programme of the Year, sponsored by Deloitte

Winner: Cycling Ireland

Nominees: Rowing Ireland; Swim Ireland

Creator of the Year, sponsored by McKeever Sports

Winner: Rhys McClenaghan

Nominees: Ayeisha McFerran and Unboxed; Daniel & Nathan Wiffen's Vlog

Community Impact Award, sponsored by SPAR/EUROSPAR

Winner: Inbhear Dee Athletics Club's Noreen O'Reilly, Eithne Walsh and Anne-Marie Kelly

Nominees: Rhys McClenaghan's Club Tour; Cricket Connects Summer Camp

President's Award, presented by OFI President Lochlann Walsh

Winner: Maeve Kyle

TEAM IRELAND HOUSE LA 2028

Following an extensive six-month search, the OFI's Team Ireland House for the Los Angeles (LA) 2028 Olympic Games will be located at Ovation Square in Long Beach. With just over two years to the Games, Long Beach is preparing to play a major role, hosting eight Olympic sports, including rowing, sailing and beach volleyball, making it one of the most active hubs of the Games. Ovation Square emerged as the standout venue choice. Built in 1923 and located in the heart of downtown Long Beach, and as a landmark former bank building offers a unique combination of scale, atmosphere and ready-made event infrastructure. Its central location and distinctive character will make it an ideal hub for Irish fans, athletes, families, partners and supporters throughout the Games.

In Paris, our Irish House was internationally recognised as one of the top Olympic House destinations. Ovation Square is set to build on that reputation, boasting a 1,100-capacity main floor, a VIP mezzanine, green rooms, and a distinctive basement exhibition and retail space built around the original 1920's bank vault.

The OFI is looking forward to working closely with the venue team and promotional partners to deliver a variety of live day-time and night-time events, athlete and family gatherings, cultural showcases and sponsor activations.

Besides hosting its own LA 2028 Games events, Long Beach is located about 25 kilometres from major Games zones such as Inglewood and Exposition Park, which will host the Opening Ceremony, athletics, basketball and swimming. A new overland metro will link Long Beach to downtown Los Angeles, enhancing accessibility for fans and delegations. Planning is underway in 2026 to develop the events schedule and the identification of key Governmental and Commercial promotional partners, as well as the exciting music and entertainment line-up.



IRISH OLYMPIANS ASSOCIATION

In 2025, the Irish Olympians Association (IOA), sought to strengthen connections across Ireland's Olympian community with a focus on recognition, engagement, and legacy.

The role of the Irish Olympians' Association is to support Irish athletes who have competed in the Olympic Games, providing engagement, and networking opportunities, and helping them promote Olympic values in their communities.

The centrepiece of the year was the IOA Barbecue and Open Day, held at the office of the Olympic Federation of Ireland (OFI), which brought together Olympians spanning a multitude of generations in a relaxed and family friendly setting. The event provided a valuable opportunity for athletes to reconnect, share experiences, and engage with the wider Olympic community. Many Olympians brought their families, and a new Olympians signature wall was unveiled at the OFI - giving Olympians from past Games a chance to interact with the organisation.

Throughout the year, the IOA maintained regular communication with its members through its quarterly newsletters. These updates ensured Olympians remained informed about relevant initiatives, events, and opportunities to engage with Team Ireland.

The IOA also played a significant role in honouring the 25th anniversary of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games at the Team Ireland Olympic Awards evening. The occasion successfully fulfilled its objective of bringing together athletes from that landmark Games to celebrate their achievements and reconnect, while also showcasing their enduring contribution to Irish Olympic sport.

Across all activities in 2025, the IOA remained focused on its core purpose: to support, connect and recognise Ireland's Olympians, ensuring their legacy continues to inspire future generations.

