



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the summer edition of the Dublin City Sport & Wellbeing Partnership newsletter.

We hope our staff, our communities and our partners are safe, healthy, staying positive and enjoying the recent sunshine! As discussed in previous newsletters DCSWP staff have reacted and adapted so quickly over the past 18 months and it is hoped communities have felt the enormous benefits of that. The focus for the summer and autumn programmes is on maximising the early mornings and the beautiful twilight evenings to assist in the delivery of programmes in a safe environment. In that regard, we are incredibly lucky in terms of the outdoor resources DCC has on its doorstep – from city parks in full bloom, walking and cycling routes along sun-drenched sea fronts to fun water sport centre activities there really is an opportunity for everyone to enjoy getting out during the next couple of months. As a service we are so grateful for the many partners that help those programmes to be realised.

It must also be noted that the June reopening of DCC's Sports, Leisure and Recreations Centres has been fantastic for the service. The centres and their staff provide critical outlets for people in communities to access facilities that can help them stay active, stay healthy and, very importantly stay connected. Congratulations to all the managers and staff in our centres who kept going, stayed positive and demonstrated commitment and resilience throughout this difficult time.

The Tokyo Olympic games have finally arrived. It's hard to think of another major global event that truly brings people together in this way. The Olympics have created some of the most magical and thrilling sporting moments for people around the world. In Ireland iconic images of past Olympic heroes lifting those medals have left an indelible mark on our collective imagination. Visibility in sport is huge when inspiring a new generation and the special spirit of the games makes young people watching think, if they can do it so can I. DCSWP is proud to have a strong connection to many of the sports represented in the games and our core programmes strive to promote the Olympic values of excellence, respect and friendship on an ongoing basis. For this edition we were very lucky to have the chance to speak to qualifying boxer Emmet Brennan, who has worked closely with DCSWP in the past and is someone who truly represents those values.

We'll all be shouting for our Olympic heroes from the couch this year but Irish fans will lift the roof off wherever they are!



OLYMPIC FEATURE

EMMET BRENNAN - NORTH EAST INNER CITY BOXING HERO AND 2020 OLYMPIC QUALIFIER

"Be honest with your goals. Don't take shortcuts, put the time into improving."

Wise words for any aspiring athletes from the gifted Dublin light-heavyweight and 2020 Olympic qualifier who kindly took the time out to speak to us before he set off for the Tokyo summer games.



Emmet, qualifying for the Olympics has been such an unbelievable achievement but from a local perspective can you give us a little bit of background on where you grew up and how you got involved in boxing in your local community?

I grew up on the North Strand in the North East Inner City. I was shy and lacking in confidence as a kid growing up so I decided to spend my time playing sports. Initially I played football with Belvedere and then I joined St. Saviour's Boxing Club in Dorset Street when I was 10. Growing up was tough and sport helped me hugely. Through sport I was socialising with other children who 20 years on are still close friends of mine. It's so important to be involved in sport growing up. All the clubs I have been involved in have introduced me to people from a diversity of cultures and social backgrounds – male, female, young and old – people from all walks of life. I have especially noticed in boxing clubs that members are all treated equally regardless of where you're from. Each person in the club gives up their own time to improve as an individual and this is respected. I have met some great people through sport that come from completely different backgrounds to myself and I still stay in contact with them to this day.



You have a strong connection to the services Dublin City Council provides for people in our communities, from working in Sports & Fitness centres to your connection to local Dublin City Sport & Wellbeing Sport Officers. Can you tell us how important that has been to furthering and supporting your boxing career?

I have been associated with DCSWP since 2017 through Derek Ahern, the DCSWP Sport Officer in my local area. Derek was also a coach at my first club, St. Saviour's. Derek has always supported my career in boxing and I see him as a positive male role model in the area after becoming an Elite champion that year. As a fitness instructor I worked with Derek and other Sport Officers on DCSWP core programmes including Change For Life, Forever Fit, GAGA, StartBox and many other events in my community. Dublin City Council in general do amazing work in my community and provide a variety of activities to ensure everyone can get involved in something they're interested in. I loved my time working as a coach with DCSWP and DCC Sports & Fitness centres as it helped me grow by giving me the experience of working and communicating with people from all backgrounds and abilities. The flexibility of working with the Sports & Fitness centres made it possible financially and professionally for me to fulfil my dream of becoming an Olympian. I needed support to train for big competitions and the staff in Dublin City Council have always helped me.

Given your success, can you share any pointers from your training regime that might help or inspire young boxers?

I think most young sports people are looking for the big changes that will help them improve as athletes. However for me the fundamentals and basics can't be over looked in any sport. I am a man of creating positive habits – if they can nail down the basics of nutrition, hydration and rest they could enhance their recovery to enable them to train better. These are the boring things but they make a huge difference to a young athlete's development. Go to a club or a coach that you enjoy being around and respect.



DCSWP Sport Officers pictured with Boxer Emmet Brennan at Irishtown Stadium. From left to right; Derek Ahern, Sharon Kelly, Emmet Brennan, Marie-Louise Reilly, John Sweeney.

Developing communities through sport is very important to DCSWP and it is clear from speaking to Emmet that he takes enormous pride from his upbringing in North Dublin's Inner City. Talking to him following his qualification was particularly special for DCSWP given his close association with our officers and the service. Emmet is proof that with hard work, determination and belief anything is possible – thank you from all at DCSWP.

HIGHLIGHTS



ORIENTEERING - NAVIGATE YOUR WAY TO SUCCESS

In late 2020 DCSWP teamed up with the Irish Orienteering Association to support young people, families and adults of all abilities to take up something a little different. Orienteering provides great opportunities for everyone to develop important life skills, build self-esteem and learn the benefits of teamwork in the great outdoors. Over the summer months DCSWP Sport Officers have been working with the Irish Orienteering Association to

develop orienteering maps that can be used on the existing MapRun6 app.

The Orienteering pilot project had a fantastic reaction when a taster event was held in le Fanu Park on 31st May. Participants from Ballyfermot and Cherry Orchard were given a preview of the maze-like experience they will enjoy when engaging in orienteering. The event provided demonstrations on how to use the app, the multiple challenges participants can choose from and the Irish Orienteering Association was on hand to familiarise potential adventurers with the small games and training programmes it runs.

DCSWP looks forward to working closely with the Irish Orienteering Association to map more locations in the community over the coming months.



WALKING FOOTBALL - NO RUNNING, NO CONTACT BUT LOTS OF FUN!

This summer DCSWP Sport Officer Fergal Scally teamed up with our Co-funded FAI Officer Keith O'Halloran to deliver Walking Football to men over the age of 55. The initiative has proved to be a major success in the community with almost 20 participants currently registered.

Every Wednesday at 2pm Walking Football takes place on the new multi-use games area (MUGA) surface in Rockfield Park, Artane. Fergal tells us that while good old-fashioned healthy competition is never far away the main objective is to keep the guys active while doing so in a friendly and safe environment.

Due to the success of the programme, this initiative will be replicated in other DCC parks in the North Central Area. Are you interested in getting involved? Contact Fergal on 087 118 1885 or fergal.scally@dublincity.ie.



UNSUNG HEROES - FIRST AID VOLUNTEERS

First aiders don't often get the recognition they deserve in sport. Many of us watched in horror as Danish footballer Christian Eriksen suddenly collapsed on the pitch during Euro 2020 and then witnessed how decisive action and quick medical intervention saved his life. We recently spoke to Sport Officer Sharon Kelly about how important CPR training is for sporting events at all levels. Sharon tells us that high profile incidents such as this bring home just how critical those health and safety skills are.

DCSWP is committed to practices that safeguard people's health and safety at events. Recently our Sport Officers assisted the Eastern Region Order of Malta with their First Aid Responder renewal practical by providing access to Ballyfermot Sports & Fitness Centre for training purposes. Over 40 volunteers completed their training on the day.

A sincere thank you to all volunteers who play such a pivotal role in ensuring events and competitions take place in a safe environment across our communities.



LEADING THE WAY IN SMART FITNESS - DONAGHMEDE PARK

City parks and their amenities provide such an important resource for the delivery of DCSWP programmes throughout the year. In the last year and a half technology has also become indispensable for supporting continuing engagement in physical activity. This brings us to a wonderful initiative in Donaghmede Park which is Ireland's very first fitness focused smart park. The Sparq Interactive initiative was recently launched in partnership with Dublin City Council. Through the use of smart technology, Sparq is setting out to enable and inspire people of all ages and abilities to get up, get active and get fit by making the most of Dublin's local parks.

By using QR code contactless technology, Sparq is set to bring free virtual fitness sessions with top class professional personal trainers straight to a person's phone. Once accessed, John Connor and Eoin Lacey from the Irish Strength Institute will guide people through their fitness paces with exercise levels and options available for all ages and abilities.

Using the smart trails in local parks is easy and accessible – a person can use their smart phone's camera or smart device to scan the QR code at each of the 10 stations to freely access their very own personal trainer and video workouts.

"Every exercise has an easy version, a middle version and a hard version so if you're regularly using this technology you can progress through the exercises" – Sport Inclusion & Integration Officer, Nuala O'Donovan

See more information about the initiative on www.sparq.ie.



LIFTING THE SPIRITS - THE JOY OF WATER

As an island, we are surrounded by water and experiencing the joy of getting into the sea or a pool can be life affirming, transformative or just plain old good fun! City life in Dublin sometimes makes us forget that one of nature's greatest health boosting resources is on our doorstep. DCSWP has dedicated facilities and programmes that encourage and motivate people to enjoy and experience multi-sport water-based initiatives in the city, particularly during the summer months.

For this edition of the newsletter DCSWP sought to shed light on the summer water programmes delivered by its two Sport Inclusion and Integration Officers, Lisa Kelly and Nuala O'Donovan. Lisa and Nuala work alongside some of DCSWP's many partners to engage people with physical, intellectual and sensory disabilities, in addition to those from ethnic minority groups. This summer three inclusive water-based ability programmes were delivered in our facilities across the city.

Activities included rowing, kayaking, canoeing, rafting, powerboating and diving, all delivered in a safe and fun environment.

For the majority of participants it was their first time experiencing water sports and it is hoped it will not be their last. Sport is critical not just in improving physical fitness but in increasing confidence levels. The class of 2021 can take inspiration from last year's participants who also returned and were excited to further develop their skills. DCSWP is proud that 100 individuals with additional needs and from ethnic minority groups enjoyed taking part this year. We also can't underestimate the important social aspect of initiatives such as this. Friendships are made through many of our programmes and these days you can't beat getting outdoors and having a laugh with friends.

With the easing of restrictions it has been wonderful to see the resumption of face to face delivery of programmes just in time for the good weather. DCSWP Officers have worked very hard to reimagine the roll out of programmes. Safety has always been paramount in the delivery of any programme and while that is more important than ever, helping people in our communities to get out, active and have fun together again is also a priority. Communities are at the heart and soul of this city and that indomitable spirit has brought us all through the past few difficult months.

We hope you all enjoy the last few weeks of summer and the promise of even greater freedoms ahead. There are so many things to look forward to from a sport and physical activity perspective – walking and running programmes, Marathon Kids, our Get All Girls Active programme and various school initiatives are all coming up. The future for Dublin as an 'active city' is looking bright!