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WELCOME!

I hope you enjoy our October issue of Connect. It's hard to believe that we are already into a new sporting year and actively planning for events in 2013 and beyond.

Many positive initiatives and activities have taken place since our last edition. Congratulations to Team Ulster who claimed victory at the 2012 Special Olympics Triple Crown Golf Event in September. Cyclist Stephen Roche led a group of cyclists from Ireland, UK and USA in the Paris2Nice challenge raising significant & much needed cash for Special Olympics to mention but a few.

We are now looking ahead to the new season which will again be very busy for Special Olympics. There are many Regional competition events planned for 2012-2013 competition year. We are continually seeking volunteers to come on board so if you are interested in volunteering for one of these events, we would be delighted to hear from you. The commitment of all our volunteers is so inspiring and critical. I would like to thank you all for your on-going commitment and support to Special Olympics Ireland. We are truly grateful to you.



Matt English
CEO, Special Olympics Ireland

Letters

Liz Callery, Regional Director for the Eastern Region, recently received this letter from the parents of athlete Ashwin Maliyakal. We asked permission to share it with our readers as it demonstrates the true appreciation that our athletes and their families have for all our wonderful volunteers.

31/07/2012

Dear Ms Liz Callery,

Greetings of the Season. Thank you very much for all that you and your team are doing for individuals like our son Ashwin Maliyakal. Coming and working in Ireland as a nurse was a dream come true for my wife Twinkle and I in 2005. But that happy dream suddenly started to change when Ashwin was diagnosed with Moderate Learning (Dis) ability in 2007 age 4.

By 2009 Ashwin joined the Special National School St Michaels House in Kilbarrack and everything was good for my wife and I in the Special Needs world. Very soon we heard of Special Olympics. Ashwin's Athlete Participation Form was submitted and approved in June 2010 and, at that point, we had no idea how much Special Olympics would impact our daily lives.

Today in 2012, Ashwin is a member of 6 different Special Olympics sports clubs giving him exposure into 6 different sports through a world that recognises and looks into his abilities. A world that has introduced us to sports like skiing and equestrian, new to both our families in our wider circle back in India.

My wife Twinkle has been selected as a volunteer with Ashwin's Special Olympics Swimming Club where she acts as the medical officer. I (Ashwin's father) am recently honoured to be selected through Special Olympics Ireland to walk into the 'Aras an Uachtarain' and shake hands with the first citizen and first lady of the country we have come to live in. I am also honoured to be selected as a volunteer and help with one of the clubs that Ashwin attends.

The above 3, especially walking into the 'Aras', are true honours that an immigrant like myself can never ever dream about. And I am proud that the opportunities have come through the world of Special Olympics that is moulding our son Ashwin into an individual with abilities.

Thank you for all that you and your entire team at Special Olympics are doing with true dedication, love and passion for everything that makes someone like Ashwin feel very at home.

A season has ended. Another season is just around the corner. Ashwin is just 9 years old.

Both Twinkle and I believe that Ashwin has miles and miles to go ahead with Special Olympics and along with Ashwin, we both also.

Yours respectfully,, Eward Maliyakal & Twinkle Thomas

Included in this edition:

Training and Volunteers.....	3
Friends of Special Olympics Ireland.....	6
Coaches Corner	7
Club Corner	15
Health in Focus	18
Sports News	19

Regional news	
Connaught	4
Eastern	8
Leinster	10
Munster	12
Ulster	16

TRAINING & VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer Induction Training

Volunteers who joined in 2012 must complete Induction Training in order to become a registered volunteer and to be insured to take part in any Special Olympics activities. There are a number of ways that you can complete the course and the training only takes 30 minutes maximum to do so please;

1. Go online at <http://moodle.specialolympics.ie/moodle> and create your training account
2. Telephone or email to request a hardcopy or softcopy version from Anne Hughes, +353 (0)1 869 1620 or you can email anne.hughes@specialolympics.ie
3. Attend a face to face course – see the website for details of upcoming sessions in each region.

All volunteers who registered prior to 2012 are welcome to take the course as a refresher so log-on or request a hardcopy and check your knowledge of the organisation of which you are a part! It takes only 30 minutes maximum, so do take whichever option suits you above.

Help Needed - Are you an amateur or professional videographer?

If so, we need your help to capture footage at some of our regional events in 2013. The events take place on weekdays and on Saturdays, depending on the sport and the region. The time commitment is flexible and will only involve a few hours overall. If you are interested in finding out more please contact Anne Hughes on +353 (0)1 869 1620 or email anne.hughes@specialolympics.ie



Search is on to find Ireland's 'Outstanding Volunteers'

The search is on to find Ireland's outstanding volunteers with the launch of the Volunteer Ireland Awards 2012.

The Volunteer Ireland Awards are the major annual initiative to celebrate volunteering in Ireland. Now in their fifth year, the Awards aim to celebrate and recognise the thousands of remarkable people across the country who selflessly give their time and talent to benefit others and their communities.

There are ten different awards categories. Special Olympics volunteers qualify for several, including; sports, youth, community, awareness raising and disability. Nominations can be received up to October 26th. Category winners and an overall winner will be decided at a special Awards ceremony in December.

The awards are a great opportunity to recognise the great work done by our volunteers across the country. Although we cannot nominate everyone – there are some volunteers that have gone that extra mile and deserve a special thank you. Last year's winner of the Sports and Recreation Category was Sharon McKeon from Cork Special Olympics Swimming Club. Sharon was nominated by 20 family members from the club for her outstanding commitment. We encourage you to nominate a volunteer who has made an impact locally, regionally or indeed nationally to the Special Olympics Programme.

Log on to www.volunteer.ie for details of how to nominate

The Importance of a phone call

Sick? Busy? Family Emergency? Forgot? Didn't think you were needed? We understand!

Sometimes life gets in the way of volunteering and you cannot turn up to an event you had signed up to do. We completely understand that these things can happen but we do ask that if you have committed to an event and you cannot show up to please get in contact as soon as possible to allow us time to recruit a replacement.

Our events cannot run without our dedicated team of volunteers. Whether you're a parking attendant, catering assistant, referee, event manager or safety officer...we need you on the day. Every event is assessed in advance and volunteer numbers are requested based on the venue size, athlete numbers, sport and safety. Safety is the most important factor when deciding how many volunteers we need. When volunteers do not show up as expected, events run the risk of being cancelled. Please contact your regional office or Volunteer Coordinator if you cannot attend an event.

How do you know if you are registered as a volunteer?

To become a registered volunteer with Special Olympics Ireland, volunteers must be over 16 years of age and complete four very important stages. Every applicant must:

1. Complete a Volunteer Application Form
2. Submit a passport photograph
3. Successfully complete the Vetting Process
4. Complete Induction Training*

Volunteers that have not completed all stages of the process will not be issued with a card and are not eligible to volunteer. Volunteers will be asked to show their Membership Card at every event and Club Managers are reminded to ask every volunteer in their club to bring their Membership Card to every training session.

*See article at top of page re Induction Training

CONNAUGHT

Connaught athletes perform well at the 2012 Triple Crown Golf event

Congratulations to the Connaught team who participated in the recent Triple Crown Golf event. The team, supported by Special Olympics volunteers Gillian Ballantyne, Paul McGarry and Tom Mulligan took home three gold, one silver, one bronze and a fifth place.

The team pictured on the right consisted of athletes Rachel Kelly (Sligo Resource Centre), Margaret Carr, (Rehabcare Sligo/Sligo Fairways), Bairbre Callagy (Sligo Fairways), James Allen (Athlone Special Olympics Club), Paul Charlton, (VTC Castlebar) and Billy McGagh (Clarenmore Centre).



CONNAUGHT CLUB News

Inter-Club Activities

All clubs are encouraged to organise an inter-club activity over the coming year. An Inter-club activity is an ideal way for clubs to meet the need for additional competitive opportunities. Inter-club activities may take the form of "friendly" or "challenge" competitions and matches. It may offer more, such as opportunities to train with others and maybe develop new skills. Many events will include both training and competitive elements.

If you are thinking of organising an inter-club activity, the Connaught office has a 'Guide to Organising an Inter-Club Activity' which can be emailed to any club. All clubs who have organised an inter-club activity should inform the Connaught office as we would like to promote these activities on our website and newsletters. If you need contact information on other clubs, please get in touch with us at telephone, +353 (0)71 9118320 and email all inter-club activity information/queries to connaughtvol@specialolympics.ie.

New athletics club for Portumna

The Portumna and District Special Olympics Club held a registration night for their new athletics club on August 23rd. The athletes will train every week in the Portumna Town Hall with support from volunteers. New athletes and volunteers are all welcome to join. Athletes can join the club from six years of age and there is no upper age limit.

For more information about this club please contact Gayle McDonagh on 090 9745880.

Thank you Covidien Medical Galway!

Over the past twelve months, staff and management at Covidien Medical Galway have organised various fundraising activities to help raise funds for four charities and Special Olympics Connaught was delighted to be chosen as one of those charities by staff at Covidien.

Staff organised a Jersey Day, Race Night at the Dogs, Table Quiz, Santa Fun Run/Walk, Monster Raffle, Parachute Jump and a Cake Sale and raised an amazing €12,000 which Covidien then matched. The total of €24,000 was split between the charities, with Special Olympics Connaught presented with €6,000. A sincere thanks to the staff and management at Covidien Medical Galway.



Families Harvest Hop

The Annual Families Social Event will take place on Sunday, 21st October at the Shamrock Lodge Hotel, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.

This year the theme is 'Harvest Hop', with live band, the Rackhouse Pilfer, performing. One of the band members is a brother of former Special Olympics athlete Barbara Kelly. This is the first time a live band will perform at the event, so we are looking forward to a full house.

For further information, please contact Connaught@specialolympics.ie or phone the office on +353 (0)71 911 8320



Volunteers

Deirdre meets the President

On the afternoon of Tuesday 3 July 2012, President Michael D. Higgins hosted a reception for young people to celebrate their contribution in building a creative and inclusive society. Deirdre Cummins, a native of Sligo who volunteers on a weekly basis with Special Olympics Connaught, was delighted to be nominated to attend this occasion. Deirdre provides support to the Special Olympics Connaught office, taking on various roles such as recruiting volunteers for events and clubs and volunteering at one-day athletics events. She also volunteers with local special schools during the summer camp season and helps out with programmes being delivered by the Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership.



Connaught Volunteer Vacancies	LOCATION	CLUB OR EVENT	DETAILS
	Galway	Tuam Headford Special Olympics Club	Volunteers required to help with swimming and /or gymnastics. Experience in either of these sports would be great, but not essential, as volunteers can access any training required. For further information please contact Patricia Creaven on 087 1354007 or email PVCreaven@gmail.com
	Galway	Lakeview Special School	The school is located in Renmore Galway, in the Woodlands Campus (next to the Huntsman). Swimming training takes place in the Carlton Hotel on Mondays and Thursdays from 11am to 2pm. We are looking for 2-3 male volunteers to assist school staff with these sessions. No coaching experience is required but anyone with a swimming qualification would be most welcome. For further information, please contact Bernadette Hanley on 085 1200323 or email principalhfg@gmail.com
	Sligo, Mayo, Roscommon, Galway	Special Olympics Connaught sports events	Over the coming season we have a schedule of sports events for which we require volunteer teams to help us plan, organise and deliver. We would welcome people with skills or an interest in event management, volunteer management, operations, health and safety, medical/first aid, coaches with sports qualifications, sports officiating, administration skills. If you would like to become a part of our team or you are interested in volunteering at our events please contact us on 071 9118320 or email connaughtvol@specialolympics.ie See the calendar of events on the Connaught section of the website for details of all upcoming events.
	Various locations	Special Olympics sports events	We require qualified medical & first aid volunteers for all our sports events over the coming season. If you have a medical/first aid qualification and are interested in becoming involved in our sports events please email connaughtvol@specialolympics.ie . Again see the calendar of events on the Connaught section of the website for details of all upcoming events.

Introduction to Coaching Practices Course

The Introduction to Coaching Practices course is designed for volunteers who are interested in getting involved in coaching. It provides a basic introduction to the principles of coaching and highlights some of the key factors a coach must consider when working with athletes with an intellectual disability. The course is non-sports specific (i.e. it does not focus on any one sport) and is open to any registered volunteer and you do not require any previous coaching experience.

Special Olympics Connaught will be offering this course before the Christmas holidays. Date and venue will be confirmed in the coming weeks and will be emailed to all club contacts and posted on the Connaught section of the website. Please email john.mcnaboe@specialolympics.ie or call the office on +353 (0)71 9118320 if you are interested in attending this course.

Connaught Regional Sports Events Calendar

DATE	EVENT	VENUE	TIME
23 Oct 12	MATP (Area 1)	Aras Attracta, Swinford	9am-3pm
25 Oct 12	MATP (Area 2)	Creggs National School, Roscommon	9am-3pm
14 Nov 12	Basketball Skills	Sligo Regional Sports Centre	9am-4pm
21 Nov 12	Badminton	Sligo Tennis Club	9.30am-3.30pm
5 Dec 12	Aquatics (Cat1 events)	Sligo Regional Sports Centre	9am-4pm
7 Mar 13	Table Tennis	GMIT, Castlebar, Co. Mayo	10am-3pm
9 Mar 13	Bowling	City Limits, Oranmore, Galway	9am-3pm
13 Mar 13	Equestrian	Sligo Riding Centre	9am-3pm
20 Mar 13	Gymnastics	Athlone Gym Club	9.30am-3pm
13 Apr 13	Basketball (Team)	Kingfisher NUIG, Galway	9am-3pm
24 Apr 13	Aquatics (Cat 2 & 3)	Leisureland, Salthill	10.15am-3.30pm
2 May 13	Pitch & Putt	Berties Pitch & Putt, Sligo	10am-3pm
8 May 13	Football	Leacarrow Football Club	9am-3pm
15 May 13	Athletics	I.T. Sligo	8am-4pm
29 May 13	Golf	Ballinrobe Golf Club	9am-4pm
8 June 13	Kayaking	Loughlanagh, Castlebar	9am-4pm
22 June 13	Bocce	Kingfisher NUIG, Galway	8.30am-4pm

Please note that dates may be subject to change.

Notification will be sent out re development days, etc., as they are organised.

Introducing Friends of Special Olympics Ireland.

Friends of Special Olympics is a new network of people who, through signing up to committed giving, will show their on-going support for the long term sustainability of Special Olympics Ireland.

Having sought professional advice on the most suitable structure for the establishment of the Committed Giving Initiative, it was decided to set up a separate fundraising entity which would allow for the building of a long-term fund to ensure the sustainability of the Special Olympics programme in Ireland. This new entity allows us to alleviate some of the ongoing cuts to grant funding.

Special Olympics Ireland conducted a major review of its fundraising strategy in response to the declining returns in fundraising and sponsorship and cuts to the Core Government Grant. The strategy review recognised the difficult fundraising climate and sought to ensure the long-term sustainability of the organisation. Traditional forms of fundraising are not giving the same return and core government funding in the Republic of Ireland has been significantly reduced between 2008 – 2012 (59%). As a result, a new Committed Giving Strategy (a monthly direct debit donation scheme) has been developed to generate long-term funding for the Special Olympics Ireland.

If you would like to find out more about this fundraising scheme or sign up as a Friend of Special Olympics please contact Sylwia Rusak: Sylwia.rusak@specialolympics.ie

COACHES CORNER

Is your athlete ready for competition?

Competition is a major part of sport and for some, is the reason they become involved in sport in the first place. For many athletes, competition is fun; it is exciting and energising, it is an opportunity to test their skills against other athletes and to really challenge themselves. For others though, competition can be a daunting and anxious experience and in some cases, full of fears.

Research has shown that athletes who have negative experiences in sport (and this includes at competition) are much more likely to drop out of sport altogether. As coaches, we have a responsibility to do everything we can to make sure our athletes have a positive and

enjoyable experience at competition and one of the best ways we can do this, is by making sure that they are truly ready for competition and everything it can throw at them.

Special Olympics Ireland has recently produced some new resources for coaches, to help identify how to best prepare your athletes for competition. These resources are available on the Special Olympics Ireland website or by contacting your regional office.

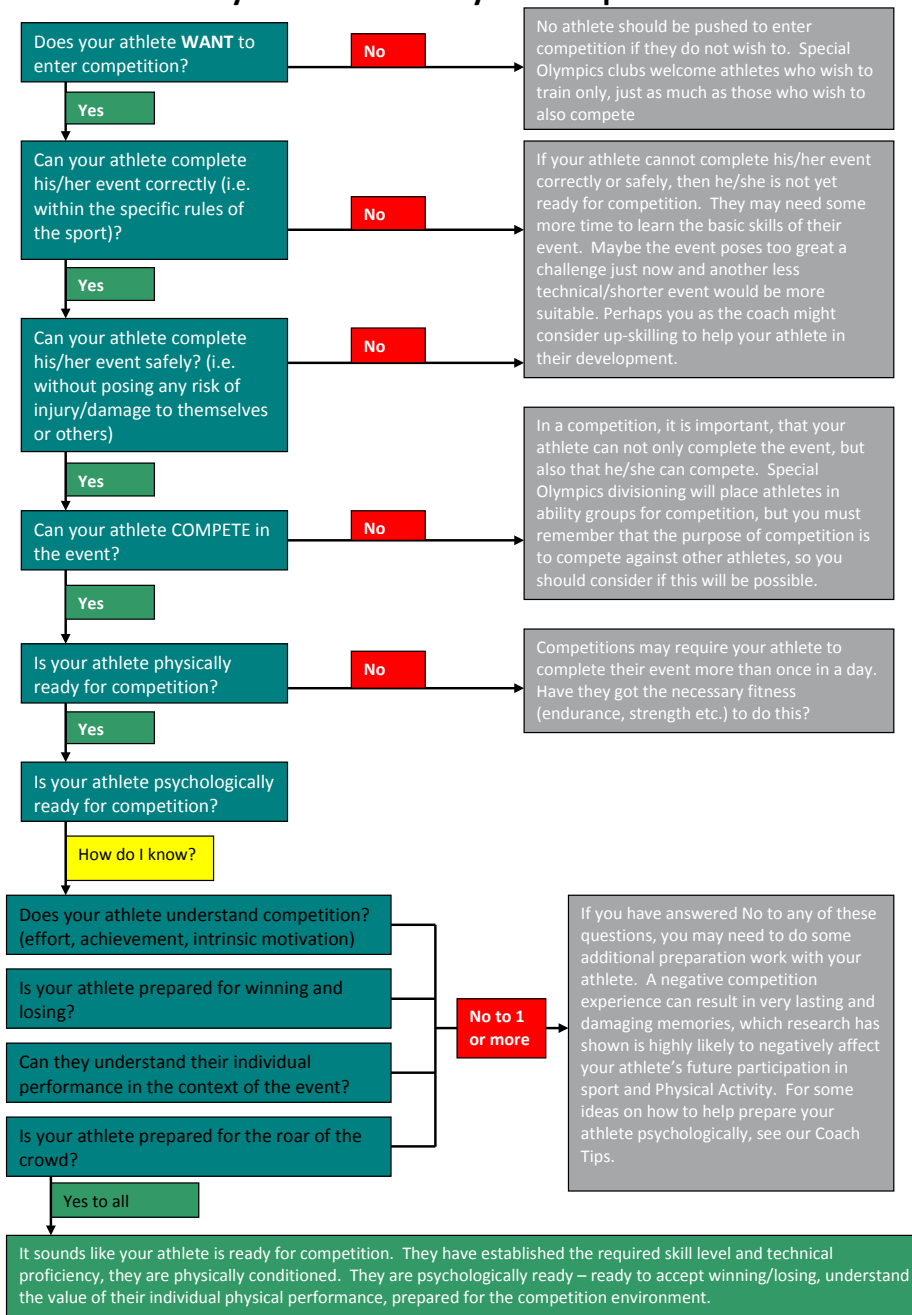
Keep an eye on our sports blog at www.specialolympics.ie/sport for more useful coaching resources coming soon.



The recently published 'Readiness for Competition - A Guide for Coaches' (pictured above) is available through your regional office or alternatively you can download a copy from the Special Olympics Ireland website at www.specialolympics.ie/coaching

The quick reference chart pictured on the right is also available in poster format through your regional office.

Is your Athlete ready for Competition?



EASTERN

Tiburon Mile Fundraising Open Sea Swim



The annual RCP Tiburon Mile is hailed as the most competitive and prestigious international open water swim event in the world. A group of volunteers from Dublin and Wicklow, including one of our Special Olympics athletes, Aisling Beacom, travelled to San Francisco to take part and raise funds for Special Olympics Eastern Region. Congratulations to all who completed the swim on Sunday 7th September. It was one serious challenge – one nautical mile from Angel Island to the shore at Tiburon. A lot of effort went into training and fundraising over the past number of months. Thanks to all involved and to those who supported their fundraising efforts.

Eastern Region Club to represent Special Olympics Ireland at European Bowling Tournament

The Special Olympics European Bowling Tournament will take place in Paphos, Cyprus, from October 21st to October 26th. The Eastern Region is delighted to have a delegation from Blue Dolphins Special Olympics club attending the event. The team are Josephine Dunne, Triona Brady, Julianne Moran, Tony Ryan, Walter Pallas, Brian Keddy, Ronald O'Neill and Shane McGrath. The team is supported by Head of Delegation, Sarah Doyle; Head Coach, Eilish Bradshaw and Medical Officer, Grainne Morris. Special Olympics Eastern Region would like to wish the team the very best of luck in their final preparations for the event.

Calling all families and carers

Special Olympics recognise the importance of family support to our athletes and strive to involve families, extended families and carers to participate and share in the joys of Special Olympics.

While the key focus for a family/carer is to support their athlete in training and competition, we do want to encourage all family members/carers to register with Special Olympics. In that way we can ensure that you are kept informed and up-to-date.

We are also looking for family members to join our Family Team and so help us to expand our support at our sports events in the coming year.

If you would like to register as a Special Olympics Family member or learn more about this programme please contact Claire Grehan on +353 (0)1 891 2009 or email claire.grehan@specialolympics.ie



Freezin' For A Reason

1st DECEMBER 2012
11.30am
FORTY FOOT, SANDYCOVE

Join us and knock the cobwebs off by plunging into the Irish Sea!

Be one of 50 people brave enough to take on the elements in aid of Special Olympics. Refreshments will be available afterwards. Make it a family event – you might even meet Santa !! Raise a minimum of €25 to participate. Sponsorship Cards are available on request.

To register your interest please contact
 Brenda or Paul at +353 (0)1 891 2000
 Email: eastern.region@specialolympics.ie

EASTERN ALPs News



In June the Eastern Region hosted a Regional ALPs Drama Workshop. Pictured above on the left are the group of athletes who participated in the workshop and on the right Triona Brady with her mentor, Jenny Hendrick, who took part.

2012 Athlete Forum

"The rung of a ladder was never meant to rest upon, but only hold a man's foot long enough to enable him to put the other somewhat higher" (Thomas Henry Huxley)

The Athlete Leadership Programme in the Eastern region has adopted the theme **"Confidence Building"** for this year. We know that our athletes have the ability to represent themselves and they can be remarkable ambassadors for Special Olympics.

Building on the first Athlete Forum held in 2011, this year the Athlete Forum will be held on Saturday 17th November in the Red Cow Moran Hotel, Dublin. A number of workshops will be facilitated including public speaking, communication skills and drama. We would like to invite any athlete over the age of 16 years to come along for the day and learn more about our programmes. All athletes must be accompanied by a mentor (who can be a registered volunteer or a family member). This is a great opportunity for athletes to get involved in the Athlete Leadership Programme to experience different aspects of Special Olympics. There will also be an opportunity for general volunteers and family members to find out more about the Athlete Leadership Programme. Current mentors will also have the opportunity to share ideas and experiences with other mentors and ALPs groups.

Please contact Nuala Wright on +353 (0)1 8912008 or nuala.wright@specialolympics.ie should you wish you to attend.

Ciara's ALPs Experience

Ciara McNeill, an athlete with Dundrum Arch Club is one of 89 athletes in the Eastern Region involved in the Athlete Leadership Programme. With the assistance of her mentor Collette Fahy, she has written this article to explain her involvement in ALPs so far.

My name is Ciara McNeill. I volunteer in St. Agnes Parish Hall on Monday mornings. I give out tea and coffee and work with Anne and Teresa who are lovely. I've also put food into bags in Tesco to raise money for the ISPC. I did a sky dive to raise money for St. Michael's House and Independent Living and have also helped out at events for Special Olympics.

We set up an ALPs Committee in Dundrum Arch Club. I am the Chairperson. We organised the Halloween Party, Valentines Ball and other parties in the club. The ALPs Committee decorated the room, booked the DJ, organised the food and took photos of all the different activities.

I have also given a speech at the Eastern Region Coaches Forum in 2012 and have completed the Introduction to Coaching Practices course.

I love doing these activities which will be towards my Gold Award. It is a big part of my life. I enjoy and hope to continue after I achieve my Gold Award. I love ALPs and think other people would enjoy ALPs too, as there are loads of things to do and enjoy and I am more confident since starting ALPs.

Ciara

2012 ALPs Awards

This year Special Olympics Eastern Region will host the ALPs awards on Thursday 6th December in the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Blanchardstown at 7:00 pm. Athletes who have completed and submitted their log books for approval will be presented with Gold, Silver or Bronze awards. Congratulations to all athletes for their hard work in completing the various aspects of their projects. Also a BIG THANKS to all mentors who have supported their athletes in the programme.

LEINSTER

Kennedy Summer School: Eunice Kennedy Shriver's Special Legacy

Run in association with the John F. Kennedy Trust, the inaugural Kennedy Summer School, a festival of Irish American history and politics, was held in New Ross, Co. Wexford from September 6th – 8th 2012.

A number of prominent Irish personalities participated at the Summer School including John Bowman, Geraldine Kennedy, John Waters, Mary O'Rourke, Áine Kerr, Colm O'Gorman and Liam Griffen. Robert Kennedy 3rd attended as the Kennedy family representative.



Front Row::Special Olympics Ireland, CEO Matt English, Athlete Liam Cody, Speaker Nora Owen. Second Row: Fergus Finlay, CEO Barnardos, Athletes Daniel O'Leary, Liz McCarthy and Sandra Wickham, Coach Aine O'Connell, Volunteer Ann Wading. Back Row Volunteer Liz Moffatt and Keith Wood. Photo: Nora Gahan

The final evening paid tribute to Eunice Shriver Kennedy, Special Olympics founder. Hosted by Nora Owen, former politician, TV presenter and Special Olympics Patron, the speakers included Fergus Finlay (CEO Barnardos), Keith Wood (Special Olympics Ireland Patron) and Matt English (CEO, Special Olympics Ireland). Tim Shriver, Chairman and CEO of Special Olympics International addressed the group via a pre-recorded video link. He stated that it was an honour for the Kennedy family to have their mother recognised in her hometown for her work and he highlighted that the strength of her legacy is visible daily within the Special Olympics Ireland programme and through the recognition given to people with an intellectual disability by the Irish public.

The evening closed with a display by athletes and trainees from Delta Centre, Carlow who gave an outstanding performance of well-known musical hits and received a standing ovation from the audience.

A presentation was made to Special Olympics by Robert Kennedy 3rd, Seán Connick, John F. Kennedy Trust and Sean Reidy, CEO of the John F. Kennedy Trust and manager of the Dunbrody Visitor Center. The award was accepted by Anne Hickey, ALPs athlete and Leinster committee member. A similar plaque will also be placed in the Hall of Fame at the Dunbrody Visitor Centre, New Ross.

LEINSTER CLUB News

Navan Arch Club Celebrate

In celebration of Jan Muyllearts' 40 years in Navan, Navan Arch Club is hosting a weekend of activities 16th-18th November 2012. A small, but international, basketball tournament will be hosted by Navan Arch Club on Sunday 18th November. A team from Geel in Belgium will join local clubs Athy, Dundalk, Drogheda and Newry for the tournament.

Jan is also hosting a charity concert in appreciation to the town, musicians and friends he has made, recalling his 40 years in Navan. International and local artists will be performing on instruments made by Jan at Ardbraccan. Everyone welcome! For more details contact +353 (0)46 9092300

MIDWAY Services

Shane Carolan, MIDWAY Services Sports Coordinator, tells us about their busy summer of sport.

"While EURO 2012 was taking place in Poland and Ukraine, closer to home "Euro Fever Soccer Blitz" took place in MIDWAY Services with five of our centres competing as Euro participating countries. While we all know, in the real Euros Ireland didn't give us much to cheer about, it was quite the opposite in the MIDWAY blitz as Ireland lifted the trophy beating Holland 2-1 in the final, after extra time!

In August our annual summer sports week was held with athletes competing in basketball, bocce, and golf skills tournaments as well as an athletics event. The week was finished off with the Annual MIDWAY Challenge Cup soccer match. Thanks to all involved, in particular to the Leinster Golf Coordinator, Maurice Carbery for his help with the golf skills tournament.

Attention has now turned to our preparations for the 2013 Special Olympics Leinster Regional Events. Best of luck to MIDWAY and all the Leinster athletes in next year's events."

Volunteers

Regional Events Volunteers

Special Olympics Leinster is taking a new approach to regional advancement events this year by organising the events in clusters which means there will be a number of different sports taking place in the same venue, town or county over one or two days. We want to create a sense of occasion bringing together more athletes and volunteers to host these events. To do this we need your help!

Can you spare one or two days in the year to help us make the 2013 Leinster Regional Events a success? Why not encourage your friends and family to register as a Special Olympics volunteer and get them involved. No sports experience is necessary and any training required will be provided; roles on the day vary from event set-up, marshalling, registration, escorting athletes, awards team, ceremonies and much, much more.

- Step 1 - Find an event on in your area or a sport that interests you on the calendar below.
- Step 2 - Contact Leinster Regional Office at +353 (0)1 629 6999 or email us at leinster@specialolympics.ie to let us know which event you are interested in and to obtain more information on volunteer roles and training available.
- Step 3 - Book the dates in your diary and start counting down to your event.

Would you like to join a Leinster Regional Event Management Team?

Becoming part of an Event Management Team means you will be planning an event and responsible for coordinating other volunteers. You will work in your team to ensure the event runs smoothly and most importantly, our athletes have a fun, fair and safe competition. These roles will require a little more of your time, but in return will offer event management training and the chance to gain new experience and work with a great team of volunteers to plan and deliver a sports event.

Roles available on the Event Management Team across all sports in the 2013 Leinster Regional Events Calendar include:

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Event Manager | 6. Safety Officers | 11. Assistant Competition Mangers |
| 2. Operations Manager | 7. Medical Coordinators | 12. Games Management System |
| 3. Event Services Manager | 8. Staging Coordinators | (GMS) Coordinators |
| 4. Logistics Coordinators | 9. Awards Coordinators | |
| 5. Catering Coordinators | 10. Officials, Referees or Judges | |

Leinster Regional Sports Events Calendar	DATE	EVENT	VENUE	TIME
	Carlow Sports Cluster			
	21-22 Feb 13	Bowling	The Dome, Carlow	8.30am-4.30pm
	21 Feb 13	Badminton	Carlow I.T.	8.30am-4.30pm
	22 Feb 13	Table Tennis	Carlow I.T.	8.30am-4.30pm
	22 Feb 13	Motor Activities Training Programme	Carlow I.T.	8.30am-4.30pm
	Kildare Sports Cluster			
	19-20 Apr 13	Aquatics	The Curragh PE Facility, Kildare	8.30am-4.30pm
	19 Apr 13	Golf	The Curragh Golf Course, Kildare	8.30am-4.30pm
	19 Apr 13	Equestrian	Kill Equestrian Centre, Kildare	8.30am-4.30pm
	Meath Sports Cluster			
	25 May 13	Football & Basketball	Gormanston College, Meath	8.30am-4.30pm
	Kilkenny Sports Cluster			
	7-8 June 13	Athletics	The Watershed, Kilkenny	8.30am-4.30pm
	8 June 13	Pitch & Putt	Lacken Pitch & Putt, Kilkenny	8.30am-4.30pm

MUNSTER

Special Olympics Munster named as the official charity for the third Clonakilty Waterfront Marathon on Saturday, 8th December.

This annual West Cork running festival includes a marathon, half marathon and six mile mini marathon with a completely new start and finish on Inchydoney Island. The Blue Flag beach and award winning Lodge and Spa will add a new and exciting dimension to each of the races. The Inchydoney Island Lodge & Spa have truly embraced the marathon spirit and have opened their doors for runners who may avail of shower, changing and pool facilities after the race.

Building on the success and popularity of this event, which hosted over 1800 entrants last year from as far afield as the Netherlands, Sweden, UK, USA and Israel, the three new routes will bring runners through some of the most beautiful scenery in Ireland. This event is uniquely placed at the end of the road running calendar and will extend the season until three weeks before Christmas. This year the Clonakilty Waterfront Marathon promises to attract a record number of participants with international representation yet again.

For more information please visit www.runclon.ie or email runclon@gmail.com.

Families enjoy a great day at Fota

Our Families Day was enjoyed by 120 people in July. The day began in the Fota Wildlife Park in Cork where athletes and their families spent time in the impressive park and saw various animals. This was followed by an excellent meal in the Fota Resort Hotel. Presentations were given on the Special Olympics Health Promotion Programme and the upcoming Special Olympics Munster athlete selections. The athletes then danced the afternoon away at the disco. Thank you to all who attended and helped make the day possible. A special thank you to the Munster Family Committee who planned the day and to all our presenters and guests on the day.

Munster Coaches Corner

No doubt we all agree that Special Olympics athletes deserve to have access to high quality coaching throughout their sporting careers.

In order to ensure this happens, Special Olympics Munster continually works to provide opportunities to expand coaches' range of knowledge and to enhance their qualifications. However, we do not currently have an accurate picture of what existing qualifications our coaches have, and we hope that this is where you can help us out.

We wish to update our register of qualified coaches so if you currently hold a National Governing Body coaching qualification, e.g. Athletics level 1, Kickstart 2, please contact Shaun or Elaine at +353(0)21 4977 192 or email munster@specialolympics.ie, outlining the sport and level of qualification you have and ideally when you achieved this qualification.

This information will help us to more accurately assess the needs of our coaches and to plan our coach education programme

Volunteers

Clubs: A number of clubs in the region are looking for volunteers to help at their weekly training sessions. There are a variety of positions that are needed so if you can help in any way please make contact with the club via the club contact listed in the table on page 13.

Sports Events: Regional sports events are back in full swing and we welcome volunteers who would like to help out for the day. Please see the list of regional sports events for details of dates and venues.

Office Volunteers: The Special Olympics Munster office in Cork City is looking for a number of volunteers who may like to work in the Volunteer Centre on an on-going basis either during office hours or on a Wednesday evening from 6:00pm to 8:00pm.

The work involves general office administration tasks such as mailing/photocopying etc., contacting volunteers to fill roles at events and in clubs and data entry.

Useful skills and experience include telephone skills, ability to use Microsoft Office (i.e. Word-processing, Excel) and being able to work as part of a team.

For more information about volunteering opportunities in Munster please contact +353 (0) 4977 192 or email Vivien.buckley@specialolympics.ie

Football Referees Needed

The Special Olympics Munster 5-a-side football league is continuing to expand, placing an ever-increasing demand on us to provide referees for matches. If you are a qualified referee, or if you have a strong interest in football and would like to get trained up as a referee, please contact Shaun (shaun.hennessy@specialolympics.ie).

Munster Volunteer Vacancies

LOCATION	CLUB OR EVENT	DETAILS
Clare	Ennis Eagles	General volunteers and a Head Coach/Assistant Coach for bowling on Tuesday evenings in the Ennis Leisureplex. Contact : Clodagh Power, 086 868 0228, email : clodaghpmpower@gmail.com
Cork	COPE Foundation	Coaches needed for aquatics, athletics, basketball, floorball, football, golf, table tennis, bocce and equestrian. Also registered volunteers to provide transport to and from events. Contact : Terence McSweeney on 021 464 3189, email mcsweeney@cope-foundation.ie
Cork	Cork S.O. Badminton Club	General volunteers are needed for Sunday mornings. No badminton background is required. Contact : Siobhan Corbett on 087 764 3152 Email : abcsiobhan@eircom.net
Cork	Iniscarra Blues Bocce Club	Two or three volunteers are needed to help with training and help to organise matches with other clubs. Contact : Anne Hyland, 087 760 6332 or 021 438 1769, email annehylan60@gmail.com
Cork	Copstown Golf Society	Two volunteers are needed to assist with coaching. Contact : Julie Dwyer on 086 859 9983, email obo14@hotmail.com
Cork	Mallow S.O. Football Club	Volunteers needed to assist with coaching on a weekly basis and help during league matches within the region. Contact : Julie Dwyer on 086 859 9983, email obo14@hotmail.com
Cork	St Josephs Foundation, Charleville	We require 4 volunteers to assist with bocce, basketball, soccer and golf skills training. Contact : Joanne Burges on 063 33620, email : pool@stjosephsfoundation.ie
Cork	Co-Action West Cork	Volunteers to assist with training and on event days, outings and competitions. Contact Christine O'Donovan on 027 50114
Cork	Mallow Marlins Club	Volunteers required for Monday night training sessions at Mallow swimming pool. Contact : Helen Long on 022 21425
Limerick	Limerick City S.O. Club	A volunteer with knowledge of basketball and general volunteers needed. Contact : Mary Keogh on 086 6081814 Email : cleaningdoctorlimerick@eircom.net
Tipperary	Tipperary S.O. Club	Volunteers required to help with bowling on Thursday evenings in Limerick and Table Tennis on Tuesday evenings at Canon Hayes Sports Complex Tipperary Contact : Phyllis Naughton, 086 6063340, email : PhyllisNaughton@yahoo.co.uk
Tipperary	Ormond SO Club, Nenagh	Volunteers needed to assist coaches at training sessions and competitions for both swimming and athletics. Contact Jean McKennedy on 087 791 2648 email : jeanmck@eircom.net
Waterford	Waterford S.O. Club	Volunteer Drivers with D1 licence; drivers to support athletes attending clubs; badminton coach; athletics coach; swimming coach; gymnastics coaches. Contact Susan McGill on 087 293 8321 Email : susanmcgill@waterford.brothersofcharity.ie
Waterford	Dunhill Fenor Motor Club	Volunteers to assist with motor activities. Contact : Joe Smith on 086 1559086, email : maura.mulvihill@sunlife.com
Waterford	Dungarvan S.O. Club	Volunteers for working individually with athletes in soccer, basketball & athletics, as well as fund-raising when required. Contact Fiona Vaianella on 087 277 4607, email fvaianella@googlemail.com

Munster Regional Sports Events Calendar	DATE	EVENT	VENUE	TIME
	3 Nov 12	MATP (adult)	Cope Foundation, Glasheen, Cork	9am-4pm
	10 Nov 12	Basketball (skills)	University of Limerick Arena	8am-4.30pm
	24 Nov 12	MATP (school age)	Cope Foundation, Glasheen, Cork	9am-4pm
	25 Nov 12	Badminton ¹	Nagle College, Mahon, Cork	9am-5pm
	1 Dec 12	Floorball	Killarney Sports & Leisure Complex	8.30am-4.30pm
	20 Jan 13	Gymnastics (Rhythmic)	Cork	9am-4pm
	26 Jan 13	Aquatics ²	Fermoy Pool, Cork	9am-4pm
	2 Feb 13	Indoor Games	St Vincent's, Lisnagry, Limerick	9am-4pm
	3 Feb 13	Bocce ³	Delta Sports Dome, Limerick	8.30am-5pm
	7 Feb 13	Tenpin Bowling	Ennis, Clare	9am-4pm
	2 Mar 13	Aquatics ²	Mallow Pool, Cork	9am-4pm
	¹ Badminton - volunteers with badminton umpiring experience needed as well as general volunteers ² Aquatics - Pool officials and timers required as well as general volunteers ³ Bocce - Trained bocce officials required as well as general volunteers			

Munster Golfers in the swing at Triple Crown

Munster was represented by athletes Sarah Hyland, Trudy Hyland and David Darrer, all from Cork Golf Club, Michael O'Leary, Kerry Fairways, Peter Kavanagh and Shane Maguire Ennis at the Triple Crown Golf event. The athletes were accompanied by a management team of Michael Forde, Head Coach, Pat Rutherford, Coach and Helen Carey, Medical. Each athlete was also supported by a caddy from their own club. The caddies were Maeve Hyland, Ginny Darrer and Michael Morrissey, Cork Golf Club, Paul Brown, Kerry Fairways and Tony Kehoe and David O'Brien, Ennis.

The athletes from Munster performed very well on day one in difficult weather conditions, and were in third position overall at the end of play. Day two saw the Munster team put in a solid performance to maintain their third place position. The strong performance of the Munster squad was evident with the results as follows: Shane Maguire, gold, Peter Kavanagh, Trudy Hyland and David Darrer receiving silver medals with Sarah Hyland (pictured above) and Michael O'Leary receiving bronze medals. Huge credit and thanks must go to the management team and the caddies as well as the athletes themselves who made it a very enjoyable and successful competition



Munster athlete Sarah Hyland in action during the Triple Crown Golf Event at Hollystown Golf Club, Dublin

Munster athletes to attend 2013 Special Olympics World Winter Games

For the first time ever, the sport of floorball will feature at the Special Olympics World Winter Games. The next Games will be held in PyeongChang in South Korea in January 2013. This is a very exciting time for the athletes, coaches and medical coordinator all from Munster who are traveling to South Korea, as part of the first ever Special Olympics Ireland floorball team. Floorball is the newest addition to the Special Olympics sports programme. It is a fast, skilful team sport, often described as "ice hockey without the ice!", and is being offered as a demonstration sport at the World Winter Games 2013.

Special Olympics Munster would like to congratulate this squad on their achievements to date, and wish them all the very best of luck as they represent their clubs, region and country with pride and distinction on the world stage.

CLUB CORNER

After a well-earned (and wet!) summer break, all clubs are at this stage up and running again. Hopefully all your members have come back refreshed and renewed and perhaps you have added some new athletes to your club.

At this time, it is a perfect opportunity for the club to ensure that each member is reminded of all that is important to your club, either through a newsletter/circular or a “start of term” club meeting. You can take this opportunity to recap on club rules and regulations, inform members of any changes to times or venues and upcoming events, introduce new members and generally get the year off to a good start.

Annual Affiliation – Done and Dusted!

Thank you to all clubs who have completed the annual affiliation process for 2012/13. Annual Affiliation ensures that all records held by Special Olympics match those held by the clubs so we can manage our information in the most up-to-date manner, streamlining communication and plan effectively for the needs of the organisation.

This year Annual Affiliation was piloted via email with approximately 5% of all clubs and this has proven to be a great success. Those clubs who participated have found that the email version was both quicker and easier to complete and update. It is planned that this will be rolled out to a larger percentage of clubs next year.

Athlete Membership Cards

Have all your athletes got their membership card yet? If not, please submit any outstanding photos to your regional office before the 28th October to ensure your athletes are included and receive their membership card before the end of the year.

Please note that all photographs should be of passport quality (not blurry or grainy) with a plain or pale background. The photograph should be from the shoulders up and the athlete should be facing the camera and not wearing sunglasses or a hat. Unfortunately, if the photograph submitted is not of the appropriate quality it is not possible to produce the card and you will be requested to resubmit a clearer picture. Photos can be emailed to the regional office and should be titled with both the athlete’s name and date of birth.

Athlete Code of Ethics & Good Practice – Supporting Documentation

The clubs whose athletes have undertaken the Code of Ethics and Good Practice training will be issued with an accessible outline of the Athlete Code of Conduct. This will help the club members to understand the training that the athletes have received. The document can be posted at club training sessions and we would recommend that all club members become familiar with its content. Any additional queries should be directed to the club’s Athlete Protection and Medical Officer.

New Term Resolutions?

Clubs are always looking for ways to develop and grow and now is the perfect time to introduce something new. There are lots of ideas for enhancing your club, such as; adding a new programme like the Athlete Leadership Programme (ALPs); Health Promotion; encouraging greater involvement of family members; or recruiting new athletes and volunteers.

Please contact your regional office if you need further information on any of the above.

Family Registration

The families of your athletes are actively encouraged to support their son/daughter/brother/sister, etc. and may often wish to receive more information about Special Olympics. However, in many cases, they may not be registered with Special Olympics. As a registered family member they will

- Receive general communications that issue periodically from Special Olympics including the Connect Newsletter
- Receive information on all relevant family events and Games programmes

In addition, they may, if they so wish be....

- Entitled to represent your athlete at club level
- Eligible to represent the club if so appointed as the club delegate at the area or Annual Regional Meeting
- Eligible to represent the region, if so appointed by the region as a delegate at the Special Olympics Ireland AGM.

Families may register by a) completing the family section of the Athlete Participation Form if they are the designated family person or b) completing the family registration form which is available through a number of sources, including the club, events, the website and the regional office.

ULSTER

Ulster take the Triple Crown!

Congratulations to the Ulster athletes who participated in the Triple Crown Golf event. Despite a first day of heavy rain, the Ulster squad stormed into the lead, and by the second day were in control. Taking two gold, two silver, a fourth and a seventh place the Ulster squad took home the overall trophy as 2012 champions. Congratulations to all those involved in the squad especially the athletes, coaches, volunteers and family members.

Pictured on the right is Ulster athlete, Faye Boyd, participating in the Triple Crown Golf event. See page 19 of this edition of Connect for a more detailed report.



Fundraising Abseil at City Hotel, Derry

Pictured are Janet Sweeney and Eileen Elliot, two of the 50 brave volunteers who abseiled from the roof of the City Hotel in Derry, the highest building in the City centre on Saturday September 1st. It was a great occasion that created a wonderful buzz and raised lots of money too!

Ulster Volunteer Vacancies

LOCATION	CLUB OR EVENT	DETAILS
Ulster Region Sports Coordinators	Alpine Skiing Bocce, Golf Kayaking Table Tennis Tenpin Bowling	We are currently seeking expressions of interest for vacant Sports Coordinator roles in these sports. The Coordinators in conjunction with Regional Development Officers for Sport, help to develop, co-ordinate and promote the sports programme in Ulster.
Ulster Region	Various regional sports events	We are currently recruiting skilled volunteers to help us deliver regional events throughout 2012 - 2013 in the following roles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event Manager • Volunteer Services Coordinator • Events Services Manager • Safety Officer Event management teams will undertake event management training and be supported throughout the process by volunteer mentors and regional staff.
Ulster Region	Various regional sports events	General volunteers are required for all our sports events and play a key role by assisting with activities such as; volunteer sign-in, sports information desk, announcer and sports officials.

Please contact us on +44 (0)28 9023 9023 or email ulster@specialolympics.ie for more information on any of the above volunteer roles.

ULSTER SPORTS News

A year of sporting competition

From November 2012 to July 2013, over 1,500 athletes from 98 Special Olympics Ulster Clubs will compete in thirteen sports events taking place in a host of venues across the Ulster Region. These events mark the next stage of the Special Olympics advancement cycle that could potentially see some of the athletes compete at the Special Olympics World Summer Games in 2015.

In order to ensure that these athletes receive the sporting chance they deserve we invite volunteers and corporate partners to help us run these events to the highest standard. By getting involved you will make a huge difference to these athletes and in return you will have the opportunity to witness true sporting action as well as share in the pride and excitement of the athletes' families and friends.

Ulster 2012-2013 Leagues

Special Olympics Ulster is delighted to announce the commencement of its 2012-2013 League season. Following the success of 2012 pilot leagues in both basketball and bocce, these have now been added to the regions fixture of league competitions. Now in its fourth consecutive year, the postal bowling league has become a permanent fixture in the region as well as a highly contested competition.

For further information on the Calendar of Regional events, how to volunteer or details of sponsorship opportunities please contact Special Olympics Ulster on +44 (0)28 9023 9023 or go to our website at www.specialolympics.ie/ulster

Ulster Regional Sports Events	DATE	EVENT	VENUE	TIME
	10 Nov 12	Basketball League Divisioning Day	Antrim Forum, Antrim	8.30am-4pm
	30 Nov 12	Motor Activities	Aura Leisure Centre, Letterkenny	8.30am-4pm
	8 Dec 12	Basketball Blitz Day 1	Castle Park, Lisnaskea	8.30am-4pm
	15 Dec 12	Badminton	National Badminton Centre, Lisburn	8.30am-4pm
	25 Jan 13	Rhythmic Gymnastics	Belvoir Activity Centre, Belfast	8.30am-4pm
	2 Feb 13	Table Tennis	Valley Leisure Centre, Newtownabbey	8.30am-4pm
	9 Feb 13	Basketball Blitz Day 2	Templemore Leisure Centre, Derry	8.30am-4pm
	22 Feb 13	Bowling	Dundonald Ice Bowl, Dundonald	8.30am-4pm
	9 Mar 13	Basektball	Antrim Forum, Antrim	8.30am-4pm
	22 Mar 13	Artistic Gymnastics	Belvoir Activity Centre, Belfast	8.30am-4pm
	11 Apr 13	Equestrian	RDA Causeway Arena, Coleraine	8.30am-4pm
	13 Apr 13	Basketball Blitz Day 3	Antrim Forum, Antrim	8.30am-4pm
	19-20 Apr 13	Bocce	Jim Baker Stadium, Parkgate	8.30am-4pm
	10 May 13	Golf	Killymoon Golf Club, Cookstown	8.30am-4pm
	18 May 13	Football	Mid Ulster Sports Arena, Cookstown	8.30am-4pm
	31 May-1 Jun	Aquatics	Lisburn Leisureplex, Lisburn	8.30am-4pm
	8 June 13	Basketball Blitz Day 4	Aura Leisure Centre, Letterkenny	8.30am-4pm
	15 June 13	Kayaking	Gartan Outdoor Ed Centre, Letterkenny	8.30am-4pm
	28-29 June 13	Athletics	Antrim Forum, Antrim	8.30am-4pm
Please note that dates and times may be subject to change.				

HEALTH in Focus

Launch of Health Promotion Project Final Report

The final report on the Health Promotion Project was launched on Tuesday October 2nd by Minister of State, Kathleen Lynch. The report entitled, "The Development and Evaluation of a Health Promotion Programme for People with Intellectual Disabilities", details the development and evaluation of Special Olympics Ireland Health Promotion Programme.

Speaking at the launch, Minister Lynch commented "I am delighted to hear such positive findings arising from this pilot programme. It is wonderful to hear how much of a difference it has already made to the participants in such a relatively short period of time. If this programme shows us anything, it is that health and sport go hand-in-hand and that positive lifestyle changes are important and beneficial to us all. I would like to congratulate everyone involved and encourage the participants to keep up the good work!"

Carol Nairn, an athlete who participated in the pilot programme, explained how it benefited her "I loved learning about healthy eating. I use the food diary every day – it helps me make sure I'm eating all the right foods"

You can access the report via the Health Promotion link on our website at www.specialolympics.ie/health

Special Olympics will continue to build on this very important aspect of our athletes' health by continuing to roll out the programme on a phased basis to clubs. If your club is interested in becoming involved in the programme contact your Regional Development Officer Clubs or Carol Farrell, Health and Education Coordinator on 01-8691669 or at carol.farrell@specialolympics.ie

Code of Ethics and Good Practice Update

In the coming weeks your club will receive a copy of the new Bullying Guidelines which are an addendum to the Code of Ethics and Good Practice Handbook. These have been put together to support clubs who may be having concerns in this area. They are also available on our website at www.specialolympics.ie/codeofethics.

Representatives from both Eastern and Ulster regions attended the Child Protection in Sport Unit and Sport Northern Ireland Safeguarding in Sport and Leisure Conference held in Armagh in September. This was a very informative conference with presentations and workshops on issues and concerns that effect clubs in the area of athlete protection. Further information can be found at www.nspcc.org.uk/cpsu

Reminder that your Regional Athlete Protection Officer may be contacted at 0818 313 045.

Health Services Training News

Intellectual Disabilities Education Modules

In October, a group of new tutors are being trained to support you in gaining more information about athletes with an intellectual disability. These tutors will be eager to get involved with you and your club so make sure to request this training.

Athlete Code of Ethics and Good Practice Workshop

Team Ireland 2013 athletes, who are in preparation for the World Winter Games in South Korea, have received their workshop training, giving them the knowledge in their roles and responsibilities as an athlete. Help your athletes follow in their footsteps by booking this 3-hour accessible workshop that can be delivered over 1, 2 or 3 sessions.

For any further information on any of the above or if you are a medical volunteer who would like to know more about more Special Olympics opportunities, please contact Muireann Ní Riain at +353 (0)1 869 1615, email Muireann.niriain@specialolympics.ie, or check out the website at www.specialolympics.ie/health.

We want to hear from YOU!

As part of the Special Olympics Ireland Strategy 2012-2015, we want to support clubs to engage with youth through the education setting and create a greater awareness of Special Olympics among young people. To help us to do this we want to find out what clubs are currently engaged with a local school or a youth group, so we can share ideas with clubs who would like to start such an initiative.

Does your club engage with local schools, colleges or youth groups? If so, send your information to Carol Farrell, Health and Education Coordinator or at carol.farrell@specialolympics.ie



Athlete Lynn Conroy, Minister of State for Disability, Equality and Mental Health Kathleen Lynch T.D. and athlete Carol Nairn, pictured at the launch of the Health Promotion Project Final Report.



SPORTS NEWS

2013 Special Olympics World Winter Games, South Korea

The 2013 Special Olympics World Winter Games will take place in PyeongChang, South Korea from January 29th – 6th February. At these Games, Special Olympics Ireland will have athletes participating in two sports, alpine skiing and floorball. This is the first time floorball has been played at a World Winter Games and it will be offered as a demonstration sport.

Team Ireland consists of the following:

Alpine Skiing: athletes Lucy Best, Katherine Daly, Rosalind Connolly, Gary Burton, Stuart Brierton and Ryan Hill, supported by their coaches Elaine Byrne, Jill Sloan and Len Gallagher. **The Floorball team** consists of athletes George Fitzgerald, William McGrath, Sean Murphy, Aidan Cross, Joseph McCarthy, James Murphy, Roy Saville and Brendan O'Sullivan, supported by their coaches Paul O'Callaghan, Martin O'Leary and Louise O'Toole. Head of Delegation, Barbara Cahill and Medical Coordinator, Julie Dwyer complete the team.

The team training programme has commenced and in addition to the sport-specific and general fitness training, health assessments have also been undertaken. Each athlete has been issued with a training log book into which a healthy eating plan was incorporated. Athletes have undertaken their Code of Ethics training. Team coaches have attended a Code of Ethics refresher and Medication Awareness training also. All team members have been fitted for their official uniform.

Family members and the athletes' clubs have received information and registration materials for the Games and it is expected that some family members will attend to support their athlete.

Best of luck to Team Ireland in the final months of training and in their participation in the 2013 Special Olympics World Winter Games.

2012 Special Olympics Triple Crown Golf Event

The 2012 Special Olympics Triple Crown Golf event took place in Hollystown Golf Club, Dublin 15 on Monday 10th and Tuesday 11th September. Two teams from Great Britain representing England and Scotland and five teams from Ireland representing Ulster, Munster, Leinster, Connaught and Eastern competed in very mixed weather conditions. Each team were represented by six golfers with some bringing their own caddy for the event. In addition each team was supported by a head coach, an assistant coach and a medical support volunteer.

The Event team, led by Pat Nolan and Peter Carroll, were supported by approximately 25 volunteers over the two days and, in spite of the poor weather on the first day, spirits remained high.

Hollystown Golf Club again proved to be a challenge that the athletes were more than prepared to take on and the standard of play over the two days of competition was extremely high, particularly in the adverse weather conditions on day one. Each athlete completed 9 holes of golf on both days of competition, with an accumulated score used for awards. In addition to the regular Special Olympics divisions, an accumulated team score was used to determine the overall team result which was won by Team Ulster. Lady Captain, Anne Heffernan, Men's President, Bill Barry and Club Manager, Ciaran Barry presented the awards to the athletes.

The preparation of each regional team was fantastic with the event proving a good opportunity for both athletes and coaches to experience a residential event, some for the first time. The support of Hollystown Golf club not only for the event but in facilitating training for the regional teams was very much appreciated.



Pictured from left: Lady Captain of Hollystown Golf Club Ann Heffernan, head coach of Ulster Erril Maney, Fintan O'Connor, Colette Kelly, Faye Boyd, Jason Bradley, Philip Patton, Barry Goan, Leigh McKiverigan, coach Ted Hardy, Ciaran Barry from Hollystown Golf Club and President of Hollystown Golf Club, Bill Barry. Hollystown Golf Club, Dublin. Photo credit Sportsfile.com



Help raise funds for your Special Olympics Club

Special Olympics Ireland has been selected by Coin Collection International (CCI) as their charity partner for October and November.

We believe that in every house in the country lie some old Irish coins, notes and/or foreign currency that has returned home from trips abroad that have never been collected. This is an opportunity for your Special Olympics Club to turn those old coins into current money. CCI can accept all types of coin and banknotes. All you have to do is sign up to this initiative, receive your club pack and encourage your club members to bring in any old Irish currency, francs, pesetas, lira etc. that might be lying around their house.

Funds raised will be divided between your club and Special Olympics Ireland

For more information contact Mark Hughes on +353 (0)1 869 1634 or

email mark.hughes@specialolympics.ie

www.specialolympics.ie/coincampaign

Get Connected

You receive Connect magazine three times a year, either by post or in your inbox. If you've read this far, you're a committed reader! And we need more of you to 'Connect' with us.

'Connect' will always only be as good as its content. We depend on you to keep us up-to-date with what's happening in your club, with your athletes, your volunteers and your families. How many times have you read an article here that reminded you of something that happened or that is about to happen in your own club but you let the opportunity slip to promote it with us. We want to hear from you, share your news with clubs around the country.

Who knows, you might inspire someone to try something new and different. You might strike up a relationship with a club in your own sport in another part of the country and arrange a friendly competition. There are so many opportunities available to us, let's be sure to share!

We recently held a forum meeting in Park House, where we asked some volunteers what they liked and disliked about the magazine. Luckily, the 'like' list was long and the 'dislike' list short – we did end up with an interesting suggestions list and are open to any additional ideas you might have on content you would like to see in your magazine in the future. If you have any ideas for interesting content and features, let us know by emailing volunteers@specialolympics.ie.

So, over the coming issues, you can look out for some new sections in the newsletter. It's our magazine for our organisation, let's work together to keep it growing and going strong!

Mary Staunton, Special Olympics Volunteer