A Submission to Government
on the Future Funding of Irish Sport

WHY IRISH SPORT MATTERS

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A Submission to Government on the Future Funding of Irish Sport

This submission has been produced by the Federation of Irish Sports in association with and on behalf of:

- **The 68 National Governing Bodies of Sport in Ireland including the GAA, IRFU and FAI**
- **The Olympic Council of Ireland**
- **The Paralympic Council of Ireland**
- **Special Olympics Ireland**
- **The 33 Local Sports Partnerships**
- **The 1.1 million adults that actively participate in sport**
- **The 280,000 adults who volunteer in sport each week**

and the millions of Irish people both at home and all over the world for whom **Irish Sport Matters.**

Sport Matters

In putting together this submission we have been fully conscious of the unprecedented difficult economic times our country is going through at present. We are equally conscious that there is a finite amount of money available to the Government to invest in sport.

There are many competing and undoubtedly deserving claims for any funds that are available. It is our considered view, however, **that sport is not being treated fairly and that it is seen as an easy target when it comes to budgetary cuts.**

The fact is that sport has already taken a **disproportionate hit** when it comes to funding. The capital budget for sports facilities has been reduced with any new round of the Sports Capital Programme suspended until further notice whilst the Local Authority Swimming Pool Programme has been closed to new applications since July 2000. And now, as recommended by the McCarthy Report, the funding provided for sport through the Irish Sports Council is under further threat having already been reduced in 2009 by 11% from 2008 levels.

Sadly, it can only lead to the conclusion that in a country that prides itself on its passion for sport and that celebrates its many successes that there is a lack of real understanding as to what **sport can and does deliver** – on a daily basis – for this small nation of ours.

It is generally acknowledged that we box above our weight when it comes to sport. In this past year alone we have **celebrated and rejoiced** in the exploits of our international soccer and rugby teams, our boxers, our golfers and, of course, our many stars of Gaelic football and hurling.

The fact is that Government funding is an **integral part of the development** of our sportsmen and sportswomen. Without Government funding it simply would not be possible to provide the very successful grassroots and developmental programmes organised and administered by National Governing Bodies and Local Sports Partnerships in every county of Ireland ensuring that our sportsmen and sportswomen get the opportunity to realise their potential. That is a fact.

We have come a long way in sporting terms in the last ten years. There are developmental programmes in almost **every sport right across the country**. The support of the Government has made such programmes possible. Without Government support for sport these programmes could not and would not happen.

It is also recognised throughout sport worldwide that you cannot simply turn on and turn off such programmes. The reality is that if you stop funding them today and even start again in a year or two, that you will effectively set **the sports affected back by anything between eight and ten years** – forget about the next World Cups and not alone London 2012 but also the 2016 Olympics and Paralympics.

But that is only part of the story. Sport in Ireland is about everyone – not just our elite sportsmen and sportswomen. Research worldwide has shown that a population that embraces sport is a healthier population. That is a philosophy that has been adopted by **all our 60 plus sports bodies** – sport is for everyone.

Again Government funding is being used to drive that message home. That is how it should be. Without such funding there will be **no general recreational sports programmes** and this will be seen particularly throughout the primary school system where much success has been had in recent years. Good habits need to be formed early.

Not that we want anyone to think that the relationship is all one way. It has been estimated that sport contributes at least a twelvefold return on the Government investment. Sport contributes approximately **1.7% of Ireland's GDP**. Major sports occasions fuel the local economy particularly in Dublin.

Sport matters. As we said at the outset, sport has already taken a disproportionate cut. This is mainly due to the suspension of the Sports Capital Programme coupled with a reduction in funding to the Irish Sports Council. Again, we would contend that this is not thought through fully.

The Irish Sports Council budget is not alone the catalyst for **improved sporting opportunities for all**, but it also represents good value.

The most visible sports capital grant in recent years has been the €191 million invested in Lansdowne Road. A simple enough statistic with a wealth of other facts behind it. That investment has generated 800 jobs during construction, will generate 1,000 jobs per event held at the stadium; has drawn in matching funds from the IRFU and FAI and will create a fantastic stadium due to host a Europa League Final and a Heineken Cup Final in the next two years.

The real cost to the Government – not €191 million but less than €40 million when you take into account all the taxes and VAT that go back to the Government out of the construction.

Perhaps we have been remiss in reminding everyone just how much sport matters and in so many different ways.

Our intention is to do just that and to remind the million plus people who actively participate in sport, the countless volunteers and the millions who simply watch that sport is important. It enriches all our lives and has the potential to do even more – and it deserves Government support. **It should not merely be 'nice to do' if there are funds available**.

Certainly, we believe it deserves more consideration than is currently the case.

We do need to stress that sport is **not looking for more**. We simply want to protect a vital part of our culture – and sport is just that. Part of our culture; part of our DNA; part of what makes Ireland special to millions of people both here at home and in the wider diaspora.

We welcome the recommendations regarding sport in the recently agreed Programme for Government most particularly, in respect of building Irish Sport Council programmes aimed at increasing participation and continuing with the High Performance System. We hope that the finance necessary to facilitate this work shall be forthcoming.

Notwithstanding the above, we are absolutely clear in what **we want for Irish sport** going forward:

- **No further cuts in the budget allocated to sport through the Irish Sports Council**
- **Sport to remain as a separate Government Department**
- **Reinstatement of the Sports Capital Programme**
- **Develop the National Sports Campus**

We will be asking everyone in sport to back the submission.

Signed by:

Páraic Duffy, On behalf of the GAA

Patrick Hickey, On behalf of the OCI

Philip Browne, On behalf of the IRFU

Liam Harbison, On behalf of the PCI

John Delaney, On behalf of the FAI

Matt English, On behalf of Special Olympics

Seamus Smith, On behalf of the GUI

Sarah O'Connor, On behalf of the Federation of Irish Sports and its 68 member sporting organisations

6 REASONS WHY IRISH SPORT MATTERS

1 Participation in Sport Improves Public Health

- 1.9 million deaths globally each year are attributable to physical inactivity
- Reduces risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and osteoporosis
- Helps control weight and promotes psychological well being
- Australia estimate that for every 1% of the population that becomes active, 122 deaths from heart disease, non-insulin dependent diabetes and colon cancer could be eradicated
- UK research has found that physical inactivity costs them up to 11% of the Health Budget
- The WHO recognise that promoting physical activity can be a highly cost-effective and sustainable public health intervention.

Think of the role sport could and should play in the health of our nation.

2 Sport Contributes to the Economy

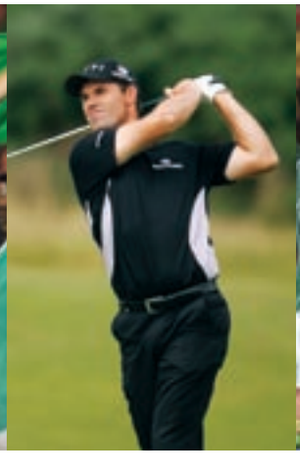
- €60.4 million total economic impact of the Volvo Stopover on the West of Ireland
- Rally Ireland generated €48 million for the North West Region
- Estimated that Ireland v England rugby international injects €83 million into local economy
- Weekend soccer international contributes €35.9 million to Greater Dublin Region
- 1,500 jobs created by the National Governing Bodies of Sport and Local Sports Partnerships
- 2009 Athlone Triathlon generated €3.5 million for the local area
- All Ireland Finals in football and hurling contribute more than €40 million for Dublin
- Heineken Cup Quarter Final between Osprey's & Munster is estimated to have generated €10.5 million for Limerick.

Without the contribution made by sport we would have to borrow even more money.

3 Sport Builds Communities

- Sport is the largest single source of volunteering in Ireland with over 280,000 people volunteering in sport at least once a week
- 15% of adults volunteered in sport in the last 12 months which is the equivalent of 400,000 adults
- 32% of the adult population are members of at least one sports club
- 59% of players socialise regularly with fellow participants as do 53% of volunteers
- 70% of sports participants say meeting people is a reason for playing.

Sport is at the heart of our sense of community. It will help sustain us in difficult times ahead.



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Sport Establishes Pride in Ireland at Home and Aboard

- 17% of the population regularly attend live sporting events
- 46% of the population have attended at least one event in the last year
- 808,000 people watched the 2009 All Ireland Football Final on RTE with 771,000 watching the Hurling Final
- 14th Asian Gaelic Games to be held in Bangkok in 2009 with 20 Clubs partaking and the Asia Pacific Ireland Business Forum Meeting opening the event
- Over 40 million overseas viewers watched Ireland in the 6 Nations 2009 with 1.3 million Irish viewers tuning into Ireland v Wales Grand Slam match on RTE – the single most watched programme of the year
- Cricket Ireland website attracted almost 5.5 million page views in 2008 and had received over 3.9 million page views by July 2009
- 1.5 million people attended GAA Championship matches in 2009.

Sport is an investment in the worldwide Irish community. It helps enrich our Irishness.

5

Sport Drives Tourism

- 420,000 people visited the Race Village during the Galway Volvo Stopover over a two week period
- In excess of 200,000 overnight visits were directly attributable to the event
- The 2009 Tour of Ireland cycle race was broadcast to a global audience of 20 million by 220 broadcasters in 180 countries
- Dublin Chamber of Commerce found that 6 Nations fans in 2008 spent €21 million on their accommodation during their visits this year as well as treating themselves to €20 million worth of food and drink with another €10 million spent on entertainment
- 62.8 million TV Viewers globally watched Rally Ireland in 2007 – the most watched stage in the 2007, 16 Event, WRC Series.

Think of the number of indirect jobs sustained by those both participating in sport and attending sporting events.

6

Sport Makes us Feel Good

- Sport has been a consistent bright spot in an otherwise difficult year
- Imagine 2009 without:
  - GAA's 125 celebrations
  - Grand Slam Success
  - Ireland and the World Cup Qualifiers
  - Bernard Dunne
  - Leinster and the Heineken Cup
  - Shane Lowry and the 3 Irish Open
  - The Irish Lions
  - Adam Carroll and A1 Grand Prix
  - Olive Loughnane, Derval O'Rourke and David Gillick at the World Athletics Championships
  - Katie Taylor and another European Boxing Championship
  - John Joe Nevin & World Bronze Medal
  - Kilkenny's 4th Hurling Championship in a row
  - Cork Ladies' 5th successive All Ireland Football Title
  - Philip Deignan and the Tour of Spain.

Think of a world without Irish sporting success.

Sport More than Pays its Way

There are many reasons why sport is deserving of continued government investment at least at the current "reduced" levels. It should however be realised that Government investment in sport is not a "one way street" – sport delivers very real economic benefits to the country.

Just think of the following:

- The 2009 Volvo Race Stopover in Galway created 200,000 bed nights
- Each year the Dublin City Marathon attracts over 3000 competitors from abroad – the majority spend a week in Ireland
- Estimated in 2001 that over the previous 50 years the GAA had invested more than €2.6 billion in sports facilities
- Attendance at matches generates €525 million each year. This money ultimately goes back into the economy in wages and other purchases
- The sports equipment industry is worth in excess of €400 million annually
- The economic value of sports "volunteers" has been estimated to be in excess of €250 million annually
- International events held in Ireland showcase the country worldwide
- The World Rally Championship in 2007 & 2009 generated €48 million for the North West Region
- Every €1 spent by the Department of Arts, Sport & Tourism under the Sports Capital Programme has been matched by €2.70 of private sector funding
- €17 million of ISC funding received by the FAI since 2004 has been matched by €35 million from the FAI with a view to increasing participation in football
- Estimated that the global media coverage value to Limerick from Munster rugby in 2008 was €58 million.

Investing in Our Future

While it is crucial that we continue to invest in our people at all levels of sports it is equally important that we do not forget the need to constantly create new facilities and to upgrade existing ones.

The GAA has undoubtedly led the way in the development of excellent facilities. In realising their vision of the development of a world class stadium at Croke Park they never neglected the myriad of first class grounds and more minor stadia around the country.

Other major pieces of sporting infrastructure have followed slowly the most notable being the development of the National Aquatic Centre in time for the Special Olympic Summer World Games in 2003.

Currently the 50,000 Aviva Stadium (former Lansdowne Road) is on schedule for an April 2010 opening as a fitting new home for our international rugby and soccer teams.

Perhaps the single biggest missing piece is the proposed National Sports Campus at Abbotstown – a campus planned to embrace all of our key Olympic & Paralympic sports and also provide first class facilities for all of our major field sports.

The plans have been finalised and planning permission obtained. It now needs to be financed. While the National Sports Campus is the single biggest outstanding piece of sporting infrastructure that is needed, the reality is that we need to continue to improve facilities for all sports throughout the country.

Just think what can be done with co-operation and relatively small investment – who would ever have thought that Real Madrid would play in a relatively modest new stadium in Tallaght?

Globally Respected

Irish Sport, Irish sportsmen and sportswomen, sports administrators have all been beacons for "Brand Ireland" for many years. The fact is when we come to the world stage Ireland boxes far above its weight.

The list of high achievers internationally is endless:

- Padraig Harrington, triple major winner and today a potential world number one
- Katie Taylor, double boxing World Champion and four time European Champion
- Jason Smyth 2008 Double Paralympic Gold Medallist and World Record Holder
- Ireland, 2009 rugby Grand Slam Champions
- Lord Killanin, President of the International Olympic Council 1972 – 1980 and Pat Hickey, IOC Member and current President of the European Olympic Committees
- Munster and Leinster winners of three of the last four Heineken Cups
- John Treacy, today CEO of the Irish Sports Council, previously double world cross country champion & Olympic silver medallist
- Ireland's soccer team at Italia 90 and USA94 World Cups
- Ireland's cricket team at 2007 and 2009 World Cups
- Stephen Roche, Giro D'Italia, Tour de France & World Cycling Championships in 1987
- Paul Brady – three time World Handball Champion.

And then the events that have happened...

- Special Olympics World Summer Games 2003
- Ryder Cup 2006
- World Rally Championship 2007 and 2009
- Heineken Cup Semi-Final 2009.

And those due to happen...

- Solheim Cup 2011
- Europa League Final 2011
- Heineken Cup 2011.

We are all happy to share in our international successes. They remind us wherever we are in the world, of what it is like to be Irish. Against all the odds we can, and do, achieve.

On the success of the Volvo Ocean Race Galway Stopover:

" I have done the race three times, including 22 stopovers, and I have never seen a reception like we received in Galway. It is fantastic; hats off to Galway and hats off to Ireland."

NICK BICE, WATCH CAPTAIN, DELTA LLOYD

Reasons Why?

Government Funding to Sport Supports:

- Sport Development Programmes aimed at increasing participation
- Implementation of Child Protection for young people participating in sport
- Employment in national sporting organisations
- Operation of national sporting organisations
- Coach Education and Training Structures
- Establishment and operation of Local Sport Partnerships
- High Performance Programmes in National Sporting Organisations
- Elite and up and coming elite athletes
- Anti-Doping
- Research Programme
- Building and improvement of sports facilities at local, regional and national level throughout the country
- Redevelopment and construction of national sports facilities i.e. Croke Park, Lansdowne Road and the National Aquatic Centre.

Therefore a reduction in Government Funding will:

- Minimise opportunities for sports participants particularly those less likely to "play"
- Impact on ability of national sporting organisations to deliver sport
- Put children participating in sport at increased risk
- Threaten existence of Local Sports Partnerships
- Write off our athletes chances at London 2012 and 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games
- Impact on quality and development of coaching in Ireland
- Allow talented athletes to slip through the net
- Loss of employment and expertise from national sporting organisations
- Reduce effectiveness of anti-doping programme thereby, impacting on Ireland's reputation abroad
- Prevent analysis thereby inhibiting development of an effective sports policy
- No access to funds for clubs wishing to improve or provide local sports facilities
- Prevent the further development of national sports facilities including, jeopardising the development of the National Sports Campus.

So just what has Government funding done for Irish sport?

In the following pages we look at a number of sports and set out the kind of programmes that Irish Sports Council funding has made possible...

...the kind of programmes that may well disappear if funding is cut.

Improving Access to Sport

We are accustomed to hearing of the work done by our major sporting bodies and indeed, our high profile Olympic and Paralympic successes. Some of this hugely significant work is set out in more detail in the following pages but that is only part of the story.

In addition to that work there is an additional 61 national governing bodies of sport working 365 days a year to drive participation in sport. In 2009, 61 sporting organisations received €11.47 million in "core" funding to facilitate this work with 25 of those sporting organisations also receiving a share of €1.53 million under the Women in Sport programme.

A sample of the success stories facilitated by the Irish Sports Council is set out below:

- 20% growth in Irish Table Tennis Association Membership facilitated largely by the success of its Women in Sport Programme
- The roll out of the Irish Sailing Association's Match Racing Programme with a view to ensuring the participation of 500 young women in 2009 alone
- The participation of 159 schools in competitions administered by Camogie
- 1,350 newly qualified swimming coaches and teachers put into the swimming system across the 32 counties by Swim Ireland each year for the last 3 years whilst 'learn to swim' programmes have been rolled out for people at every stage of the lifecycle
- 20% increase in people playing cricket with clubs now established in 30 of the 32 counties
- 36% average annual growth in Triathlon Ireland membership each of the last 3 years
- The employment of Regional Development Officers in Archery, Athletics, Cricket, Basketball, Badminton, Boxing, Cerebral Palsy Sport, Gymnastics, Ladies Gaelic Football, Camogie, Hockey, Irish Wheelchair Sport, Pitch & Putt, Rowing, Special Olympics Swimming, Tennis and Volleyball to name but a few all of whom work in conjunction with LSPs in every county of Ireland
- Training of 466 Tennis Coaches over the last three years
- Hockey brought to 45 primary schools for the first time in 2008 through the Tricks4Sticks programme
- 300 women took part in the Dublin City "Super Sprint" Triathlon aimed at allowing women give the sport a try
- Development and Implementation of the Coaching People with Disabilities Framework which will see coaches across all sports receive basic disability awareness training as part of their sport specific coaching programmes
- 9,000 competitors took part in the HSE Community Games National Finals
- 78,000 primary school kids play basketball in school with it ranking as the 1st or 2nd sport in terms of female participation.

+20%
growth in Irish Table Tennis Membership due to Women in Sport Programme

1,350
newly qualified swimming coaches and teachers put into the swimming system each year

+36%
average annual growth in Triathlon Ireland membership in each of the last 3 years

Providing opportunities for the best young talent

2009 saw the Irish Sports Council distribute €5.12 million in high performance funding to 16 sports. This investment allows the sports organisations that receive such funding to develop and implement performance plans that cover every aspect of elite training and competition for junior to world class athletes.

The Performance Plans are designed to facilitate sustained Irish sporting success with resources directed not just at athletes already achieving on the international stage but also ensuring that those with talent are provided with a proper pathway to allow them maximise their potential.

Indeed, 2009 has been an outstanding year for Ireland's up and coming sportsmen and sportswomen – proof that this system is working:

- Ciara Mageean – 800m Silver Medallist World Youth Athletics Championships
- Annalise Murphy – World U21 Laser Radial Champion & Philip Doran U17 World Laser Radial World Champion
- Grainne Murphy winning 3 gold medals and a bronze at the European Junior Swimming Championships including breaking the European Junior Record in the 400m Individual Medley
- Brian Keane in his first season as a fulltime triathlete finished in the top 3 in every European Triathlon Event he competed in
- 2 of Ireland's junior tennis players are in the World Top 100 whilst 30 players train full time at the National Tennis Academy
- Bronze Medals for 4x100m Girls Relay Team at European Youth Olympics
- Joe Ward World Junior Light Middleweight Champion & Jason Quigley European Youth Welterweight Champion
- Sam Bennett European Junior Points Track Champion
- Leona & Lisa Maguire – European Junior Solheim Cup Team
- Ireland's adaptive rowers win Bronze Medal at their first ever World Cup Regatta
- Chloe Magee – Gold Medal at European Junior Championships
- Daniel Fox (13) gold medal at gymnastics' Celtic Cup.

No.1
Annalise Murphy – World Under 21 Laser Radial Champion

2
of Ireland's junior tennis players are in the World Top 100

Gold
Sam Bennett – Gold Medal Winner, European Junior Points Track Champion

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WHY GOVERNMENT FUNDING MATTERS TO GAA

"Community is at the heart of the GAA. It is all important. Government funding is essential – particularly in the creation of local facilities. It is a stated intention that all of the units of the Association should have access to first class facilities. To do this we need consistent state support."

Paraic Duffy, Director General, GAA

IRISH SPORTS COUNCIL FUNDING FACILITATED:

- **75,000 primary school kids put through GAA development programme in Dublin with each child receiving an average of eight one-hour sessions**
- **2,700 primary schools participate in Gaelic games initiatives**
- **82,500 Cúl Camp participants in 2008**
- **2,700 people involved in hurling schools of excellence**
- **3,800 participants in football schools of excellence**
- **50,000 qualified coaches**
- **300 full time and part time personnel working in games development with the principal objective being to drive participation**
- **2,610 clubs in which Gaelic games development programmes are run by volunteers**

TOYOTA
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WHY GOVERNMENT FUNDING MATTERS TO RUGBY

"In recent years rugby has expanded beyond our wildest dreams. Today the sport has been introduced at Primary School level and we have seen new clubs spring up in more rural areas. Government funding is essential if we are to continue to develop the sport."

Philip Browne, Chief Executive Officer, IRFU

IRISH SPORTS COUNCIL FUNDING FACILITATED:

24% increase in rugby participation numbers between 2008 & 2009

46,463 school children put through a six week rugby development programme in 2008/2009 up 31% from 2007/2008

468 teams in 24 venues took part in the 2008 Bud Light Tag Series with 113 teams participating in the four Beach Tag events held around the country

40 Mini Rugby, 20 Foundation and eight Level 1 Coaching Courses run by Development Officers and tutors across the four provinces

57 schools in Donegal exposed to rugby development programmes with the result that two clubs have since developed mini-rugby sessions for the first time

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3
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WHY GOVERNMENT FUNDING MATTERS TO FOOTBALL

"The expansion of football into new areas has been one of the great success stories. Today a broader cross section of the population than ever before are involved. That we have been able to do this is in no small way due to the investment made by the Government . We cannot afford to stop now!"

John Delaney, CEO, FAI

IRISH SPORTS COUNCIL FUNDING FACILITATED:

- **€17 million of ISC funding received since 2004 and matched by €35 million from the FAI to drive participation**
- **180,623 primary school children participated in Buntus (introduction to sport) programme to date**
- **10,871 primary school teachers trained to delivery introductory football training**
- **15,416 children in 972 schools partaking in the EA Sports five-a-side competition**
- **17,663 participants in the Social Inclusion Futsal Programmes**
- **22,607 qualified coaches**
- **5,066 people have taken part in the FAI's intercultural programme through club open days, blitzes and workshops**
- **57% growth in girls' and womens' football since 2005**
- **3,476 participants with a disability exposed to the "Football for All" Programme**
- **19,204 participants in the FAI Summer Soccer School Programme 2009**
- **€6.2 million invested in 64 mini pitches in 20 counties around the country**

O'Neills

WHY GOVERNMENT FUNDING MATTERS TO PARALYMPICS/ DISABILITY SPORT

"The National Sports Campus must be built. It is an essential piece of sporting infrastructure that will mean so much, particularly to current and potential Olympic and Paralympic athletes, intent on being the best that they can be."

Liam Harbison, Chief Executive, Paralympic Council of Ireland

IRISH SPORTS COUNCIL FUNDING FACILITATED:

3,1750 adults and 1,252 children have participated in Sports Inclusion Development Programmes ("SIDO Programme") nationwide in 2008/2009

75% increase in the number of disability services providing sport and physical activity since commencement of SIDO Programme

192 regular club/sessions occurring for people with a disability

262% increase in the number of Boccia Clubs nationwide since 2008

10 Powerchair Soccer Clubs now established where there were none prior to the SIDO Programme

"Never did I think that I would play one of my favourite sports in the world, at the tender age of thirty-seven! Powerchair Football is played by people that use power wheelchairs. This game is the nearest thing to real soccer that powerchair users are going to get to participate in. Like me, a lot of people may have thought other sports for people with disabilities were very mundane, but with this game you can't help but be motivated by it and enjoy it."

Ciarán Nesbitt,
Member Powerchair Soccer Team,
Joseph's Boys & Girls Football Club,
Sallynoggin, Co. Dublin

TIBHAR

WHY GOVERNMENT FUNDING MATTERS TO SPECIAL OLYMPICS

"Sport is of huge importance for people with disabilities. It builds friendships, instils confidence and makes a real difference to health and well being. We must continue to invest. Not to do so would send out a message that we do not care for a group of citizens that we should nurture and be proud of."

Matt English, CEO, Special Olympics

IRISH SPORTS COUNCIL FUNDING FACILITATED:

11,000 people with an intellectual disability participate in one of 447 clubs throughout the 32 counties of Ireland

765 athletes and 32 new clubs have joined the programme in the first eight months of 2009

6,000 athletes participated in regional games in 2009

14 different sports represented in the 2010 National Games including kayaking for the first time

22,000 volunteers are registered with Special Olympics

ESB

WHY GOVERNMENT FUNDING MATTERS TO OLYMPIC SPORTS

"Ireland needs good facilities if our sportsmen and sportswomen are ever to realise their full potential. We have really talented individuals. In almost every other country, the state would invest in the kind of facilities which would allow that talent to blossom."

Patrick Hickey,
President Olympic Council of Ireland,
IOC Member and President European
Olympic Committees

IRISH SPORTS COUNCIL FUNDING FACILITATED:

Triathlon:
16,000 people participated in Triathlon and other multi-sport events in 2009

Tennis:
25,000 juniors involved in the nationwide Annual Parks Tennis

Hockey:
8,555 boys and girls attended IHA funded festivals, blitzes and leagues nationwide in over 19 counties

Swimming:
Over 3,000 volunteers undertaken child protection training over the last 5 years

Athletics:
Over 12,000 people take part in the Dublin City Marathon

WHY GOVERNMENT FUNDING MATTERS TO GOLF

"We're never fond of players going to universities in America. Now we can say there is an educational programme in place through the Paddy Harrington Scholarship at the University of Maynooth and the Sports Science programme. We can't overlook the support we get from The Irish Sports Council. Our role is to develop the game of golf and the Sports Council provides grants through the Sports Trust to assist players making the transition from top amateur to the paid ranks."

Seamus Smith, General Secretary, GUI

IRISH SPORTS COUNCIL FUNDING FACILITATED:

Over 200 children receive coaching each week at the National Academy as part of Junior Golf Ireland

47% increase in coaching centres from 2007 to 2008 – there are now coaching centres in all but two counties in Ireland

1,941 children received coaching within clubs and driving ranges in 2008 with a further 750 receiving coaching at tournaments and coaching clinics

213 schools took part in the Tri-golf primary school golf programme in 2008

432 volunteers put through child protection awareness training in 2008

593 children visited Junior Golf Ireland Tent at the 2008 Irish Open receiving clinics from Irish professionals

18 aspiring professional golfers received assistance in 2009 from the Team Ireland Golf Trust. Players who have received assistance in the past include; Padraig Harrington, Paul McGinley, Peter Lawrie, Damian McGrane and Gary Murphy

Our finest sportsmen and sportswomen have been supported either directly or indirectly by Government Funding.

The next generation deserve the same, if not better support.

TOYOTA
Wilson Staff

In Summary

We want the government to take sport and the millions of Irish people for whom sport truly matters seriously to ensure that:

- **There are no further cuts in the budget allocated to sport through the Irish Sports Council**
- **Sport to remain as a separate Government Department**
- **Reinstatement of the Sports Capital Programme**
- **Develop the National Sports Campus**

We will also be asking all of our stakeholders to support our proposal.

WHY IRISH SPORT MATTERS

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Mary Davis, Managing Director Special Olympics Europe Eurasia
Morning Ireland, Monday 23rd March 2009

"What an inspirational weekend – highly charged and emotional. I cannot imagine anyone across the country that wasn't touched by the magnificent performances of the weekend. We celebrated, we felt proud, we felt good about ourselves and we felt a huge sense of achievement. Sport has that power, that power to inspire, to believe, to never give up, the power to overcome even the greatest of obstacles we may face. We saw it on Saturday through Rugby and Boxing and we have seen it so many times in the last couple of months through the outstanding successes of the Irish in Cheltenham, the Indoor Athletics, the golf and when our Special Olympics Athletes returned from the World Winter Games. Investment in sport is an investment in our countries health and well-being. On Saturday in a highly intense and physically demanding encounter, the Nation was lifted from the chill winds of the recession and this time of worry and uncertainly."

For more reasons why Irish Sport Matters please contact

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