



PRESS RELEASE

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Team Ireland compete to be European Champions

Ireland's top Junior Lifesavers are currently taking part in the European Junior Lifesaving Championships from 20th August – 27th August. The competition sees lifesavers from countries across the continent compete in pool and sea environments at Gorzow Wielkopolski and Meidzyzdroje, Poland. Team Ireland have broken a number of national records in events so far.

The Championships simulate real-life rescue situations that Lifeguards can expect to encounter and pits the best Junior Lifesavers from around Europe against each other in a series of gruelling water rescue scenarios in both pool and beach environments.

The European Junior Lifesaving Championships is an annual event open to those aged 18 and under and organised under the aegis of International Lifesaving Europe (ILSE) which controls the sport worldwide. The sport of lifesaving exists to encourage lifesavers to maintain the skills, drills and physical fitness required for performing their lifesaving duties. The sport is truly multi-disciplined and takes place in the pool, on the beach and in the ocean. It has close ties to swimming, athletics, kayaking, rowing, surfing and power boating and is based on the equipment and skills that lifeguards use to perform lifesaving rescues.

"Ireland has successfully competed in European and World Lifesaving Championships over the years and these events are a fantastic opportunity for Ireland's lifesavers to further develop their skills in an international setting," commented Simon McGarrigle, Chair of the Water Safety Ireland Sport Commission. "Ireland's lifesavers have broken a number of records in the opening days of the competition and I would like to acknowledge the efforts of the team, both coaches and competitors, in representing Ireland so well on the European stage".

Junior competitors typically become top Lifeguards, patrolling beaches and pools in Ireland and abroad. It is a sport that gives so much back to a community in terms of a skill that benefits all users of our wonderful waterways.

Ends

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Notable pool results so far:

Day 1 finals

A final

Leana Liddane broke the Irish senior and junior record in the heats and again in the 'A final of the 100m Tow. She also competed in the A final of the 200 Obstacle swim.

A final

The girls 4 x 50m Obstacle Relay, consisting of Lily Sheehy Amy Noble, Leana Liddane and Elin Blake broke an 8 year old national junior record in the heat and again in the final where they placed 6th.

A final

The Mixed Medley Relay team consisting of Oisín O'Grady, Ferdia Hayes, Elin Blake and Leana Liddane broke the Irish record in the heat, placing 5th in the final.

B Final

Jamie Flynn and Amy Noble were in their respective B finals in the 200m Obstacle race, while Lily Sheehy and Cailim Van Dam were in their respective B finals of the 100m Tow.

Day 2 finals

A final

The girls Medley and Manikin Relay teams reached A finals placing 8th in the Manikin Relay and 5th in the Medley.

B final

Elin Blake made the B finals in the 100m Medley and 50m Manikin Carry in which she broke the National Junior and Senior record with a 39.10 in the heat.

B final

Katie Cotter made the B final in the 100m Carry with a 4 second Personal Best.

B final

Leana Liddane, Lily Sheehy, Oisín O'Grady and Ferdia Hayes reached B finals in the Super Lifesaver Event; a gruelling event which includes a swim, carry, swim with fins and tow elements. They all improved from their heat swims with Leana only milliseconds off her own Irish record set at the Spanish Nationals event in May.

B final

Oisín O'Grady also reached a B final in the 50m and 100m carry where he was only milliseconds off his national record from the Stillwater championship in UL in February.

B final

The boys Manikin and Medley Relay teams both reached B finals, winning the Medley B final.

Additional notes / Event descriptions:

Manikin Relay: Four competitors in turn carry a manikin approximately 25m each.

Medley Relay: With a dive start on an acoustic signal, the first competitor swims 50m freestyle without fins. With a dive start after the first competitor touches the wall, the second competitor swims 50m Freestyle with fins. With a dive start after the second competitor touches the wall, the third competitor swims 50m freestyle towing a rescue tube. The third competitor touches the turning edge. The fourth competitor is in the water wearing fins with at least one hand on the turning edge or starting block. The fourth competitor takes the harness of the rescue tube and the third competitor to a fourth competitor in the water wearing fins with at least one hand on the turning edge or starting block. The third competitor, playing the role of “victim,” holds the rescue tube with both hands, while being towed 50m by the fourth competitor to the finish.

Line Throw: In this timed event, the competitor throws an unweighted line to a fellow team member located in the water located 12m distant and pulls this “victim” back to the finish edge of the pool.

Surf Race: With a running start into the surf from the start line on the beach, competitors swim around the 400m course designated by buoys, returning to shore to finish between the finish flags on the beach.

Board Race: Competitors stand on or behind the start line on the beach with their boards 1.5m apart. At the start signal, competitors enter the water, launch their boards, and paddle the course marked by buoys, return to the beach, and run to cross the finish line.

Ski Race: On the starting signal, competitors paddle their skis around the course marked by buoys and return to finish when any part of the ski crosses the in-water finish line – ridden, gripped, or carried by the competitor.

Oceanman: Competitors cover a 1200m course that includes a swim leg, a board leg, a ski leg, and a beach sprint finish.

Board Rescue: In this event, 1 member of the team swims approximately 120m to a designated buoy, signals, and waits to be picked up by the second member of the team on a board. They both paddle to shore and cross the finish line on the beach with the board.

Tube Rescue: Four competitors from each team participate in this event: a “victim,” one rescue tube swimmer, and two rescuers. The victim swims approximately 120 m to a designated buoy, signals, and waits to be rescued by the rescue tube swimmer. As they return to shore, the remaining two rescuers enter the water to assist. The event finishes when the first competitor in a team crosses the finish line while in contact with the victim.

Taplin: Teams of 4 competitors (1 swimmer, 1 board paddler, 1 surf ski paddler, and 1 runner) cover the course in a sequence of legs determined by draw at the start of each competition.

Flags: From a prone starting position on the beach, competitors rise, turn and race to obtain a baton (beach flag) buried upright in the sand approximately 20m away. Since there are always fewer batons than competitors, those who fail to obtain a baton are eliminated.

Run Swim Run: From the start line, competitors run to pass around the turning flag and enter the water to swim out to and around the buoys. Competitors swim back to the beach to again run round the turning flag before running to the finish line.

Simulated Emergency Response Competition (SERC): The Simulated Emergency Response Competition tests the initiative, judgment, knowledge, and abilities of 4 lifesavers who, acting as a team, apply lifesaving skills in a simulated emergency situation unknown to them prior to the start. This competition is judged within a 2-minute time limit. All teams respond to the identical situation and are evaluated by the same judges.