

Missing Sport: It's So Much More Than a Game

4th June 2020

No, it's not only a game. It's so much more. ECP coach Darren talks about his need for sport.

This morning I read in a WhatsApp group that the leisure centres in Vitoria are unlikely to open until September. That means I can't play squash for at least another three months.

Some might say that there are much more important things to worry about and they are right, but that doesn't stop me feeling sorry for myself. I feel a little bit lost without sport.

I spent my youth playing sport. I competed at county, provincial and national level in six sports. This meant I had training every day and was competing somewhere in Ireland every weekend. I also competed for my school which meant more training and competitions during the week.

We often hear people say they like sport because it makes them **take their mind off** things, to not have to think, to not feel, to escape their lives. I love sport because it makes me feel intensely.

The mix of nerves and excitement before running the 110m **hurdles**. The concentration and focus on attacking the first hurdle at speed and arriving with the correct **leading leg**. The first hurdle is vital to running a good race. Once you get that right, the **buzz** of jumping ten hurdles at speed while racing and trying to win is phenomenal.

The feeling of happiness when you win is fantastic. When you lose, it can be heart breaking, but this is just

Before you read the article, find this vocabulary in the text:

unlikely: improbable, very small chance something will happen

take their mind off: to make you stop thinking or worrying about something

hurdles: upright frames over which athletes in a race must jump

leading leg: the first leg that goes over the hurdle

buzz: high sense of excitement

lining up: standing beside the other athletes at the start of a race

flying: running really fast, performing very well

I had him: I was in a position to beat him

clipped: to gently hit off something

struggle: to proceed with difficulty

in awe: a strong feeling of respect/amazement

staring: a fixed look with eyes wide open

as important to the whole experience.

A race I'll never forget is when I fell at the last hurdle. I felt sure I was about to beat the best hurdler in my age group. He was an international and I had never beaten him. He was a year older than me and much stronger. It was intimidating **lining up** beside him. But on this occasion I was **flying** and **I had him**. I just needed to give it a little extra push. I **clipped** the second last hurdle which affected my stride onto the

final hurdle. I fell and could only watch him sprinting to the line to take gold. I didn't even win a medal. I can still feel that frustration today. But that is why I love competing. It's the mix of emotions and the memories.

Now I play squash, a sport I began playing at the age of five. It's a passion. It's a natural drug and I need it for my mental well-being. I can honestly say I would **struggle** in life without it. I enjoy the whole process of finding better ways to train. The training itself. Planning tactics. The excitement of playing. The winning and the losing. The ups and downs and looking forward to the next challenge.

Sport is a way of life. You enjoy the company of like-minded people. You go through the highs and lows together. You get to watch **in awe** some amazing athletes. They can leave you **staring** in disbelief and wondering how any human being could achieve such brilliance. I love it.



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Let's chat about that!

Write your opinions in an email and send them to your ECP coach!

Is there an activity you are missing during lockdown?

Do you believe sport to be something important or trivial?

Would you be interested in watching sport on television with athletes performing in empty stadiums?

What sports will suffer most as a result of the Coronavirus?

Explain why you like, or don't like, sport.

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In June, **Coffee Saturdays** will take place via **Google Meet**

Date: Saturday 6th June

Time: 11:00 to 12:30

<https://meet.google.com/ynk-jhja-mip>

Friday 26th June

CINEMA NIGHTS!

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Is it a basketball court or basketball pitch?



How to use the words **court**, **course**, **pitch** and **track**.

Court:

An area made for playing games such as tennis. A tennis/volleyball/basketball/squash **court**.

*They were penalised for having too many players on the **court**.*

Course:

An area of land or water used for a sports event. A golf course/cross-country **course**.

*A golf **course** consists of eighteen holes.*

Pitch:

A marked-out area of ground on which a sport is played. A football/cricket/rugby/hockey **pitch** (US: **field**).

*At the end of the match the fans invaded the **pitch** to celebrate their side getting promoted.*

Track:

A type of path or road, often in the shape of a ring, which has been specially designed and built for sports events, especially racing.

An all-weather **track**. A dog/horse **track**.

*The runners are now on their final lap of the **track**.*

Slope:

Part of the side of a hill or mountain.

A ski/mountain **slope**.

*Snow had settled on some of the higher **slopes**.*

