



**DATE: 27 JULY 2014**

## **SUCCESSFUL DAY FOR TEAM NI**

It was a successful day in Glasgow for Sport Northern Ireland supported athletes.

Team NI's bowlers have a chance to win the countries first gold medal of the Commonwealth Games on Monday morning when the men's triples skipped by Neil Booth take on South Africa in the final.

Booth, Paul Daly and Neil Mulholland beat Wales 20-12 in their semi-final at Kelvingrove on Sunday after getting off to a slow start. They trailed 10-8 with eight ends to go but bounced back to secure the win.

*"It was very similar to yesterday, both times we have managed to claw our way back. The important thing is to dig in when you are a few shots down so that's what we managed to do and we made sure to keep the momentum up. We are delighted with the result and are confident going forward to the final," said Booth.*

*"There's no reason why we can't go out there and win the final. We are a good triple and have good experience in the triple so we are confident."*

There wasn't to be a medal for Craigavon's Catherine McMillen in the women's singles. She lost out in the semi-final against New Zealand's Jo Edwards 21-8 and moved into the bronze medal play-off against South Africa's Colleen Piketh.

After nine ends of a tight contest McMillen led 8-7 but gave away a two at the next end and would never lead again as she was eventually beaten 21-10.

The next set of group matches also got underway on Sunday. In the men's fours the successful triples rink was joined by Ian McClure but they needed two shots on the final end to get past Zambia 11-10.

In the men's singles Martin McHugh also got off to a winning start with a 21-18 win over Peter Juni from Papua New Guinea.

The winning streak continued for boxers Ruairi Dalton, Joe Fitzpatrick, Sean Duffy and Sean McGlinchy as they all secured their places in the quarter finals.

Belfast flyweight Ruairi Dalton defeated Tanzania's Ezra Paul Mwanjwango by unanimous decision, He'll fight Australia's Andrew Moloney on Tuesday.



Speaking about his second successive unanimous decision of the Games, Dalton said:  
*"That's something that gives me a lot of confidence. It's another step closer to a gold medal and I'm certainly in it to win it."*

*He added: "You don't get much of a break, you are fighting every two days but that's boxing for you, nothing is easy. I'm happy with my performance, I tired a wee bit at the end but I stuck to the plan."*

*"Everyone is trying to keep the momentum going and for such a small country we are doing really well."*

There was joy for Joe Fitzpatrick as he beat Lesotho's Qhobosheane Mohlerepe in lightweight last 16 by split decision. He'll fight Kenya's Okongo Nicholas Okoth in the quarter finals on Tuesday.

*"I was a bit rusty. I got a bye so I was hanging around for a few days just itching to get in the ring. You get into it quickly, though. It's brilliant to be in the final eight of the Commonwealth Games and I can't wait to get going again," said Fitzpatrick.*

*He added: "It was a good fight but he was a very dirty fighter. I was happy with my performance and the win and the atmosphere was brilliant but I was able to stay in the zone."*

The 19-year-old, who is the youngest of Team NI's boxing team, said: *"I might only be 19 but George Best was younger than that when he played in front of big crowds so it's no big deal. It can only get better for me."*

Sean Duffy took on Tanzania's Gaudence Fabiani Pius, winning his fight by split decision. He faces Malaysia's Akyazlan Khir Azmi on Tuesday.

*"Yesterday was the hard one. They call it ring rust. The first fight you have to get used to the surroundings and used to the crowd, it takes a lot out of you. We had to focus on the job at hand today and luckily it is onwards and upwards," said the boxer.*

*He added: "Our coaching team has got everything covered so there's no danger of us not being fully prepared when we get in the ring. We proved that tonight."*

After a slow start, boxer Sean McGlinchy won his heavyweight contest against Jamaica's Cheavan Clarke by split decision. He will fight Kenya's Ajowi Elly Ochola in the quarter finals.

*"After round one, the coaches had to wake me up a bit and say get your boxing shoes on but in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> I came out and showed heart and true sportsmanship. I feel happy with what I've done tonight apart from the first round and I'm going to bed a happy man tonight," said McGlinchy.*



However, there was disappointment for Delhi Silver medalist Steven Ward earlier in the day after he lost out on his first fight in the heavyweight division against England's Warren Baister.

*"I'm just gutted. It was a tough fight and I felt it could have gone either way but I've no one to blame but myself. It wasn't the coaches fault and it wasn't to do with my training, it was the last two rounds," said Ward.*

*Looking back at his performance, he added: "I would have changed a lot, I would have been busier and a couple of times I was trying to fight when I didn't really have to. I felt I won the first round clean by a mile but I didn't stick to the plan for the next two rounds and I'll learn to listen to my coaches more. I wasn't here just to make up the numbers; I wanted to win a medal. I put in so much hard work and it's just gutting."*

Ward says he is "disappointed" he drew Baister, the highest ranked boxer in the tournament, in the first round. *"This is the first year there's been no seeding and he was No.1 in the rankings and I'm No.2 so this should have been a fight for the final, not the first round. It's the fight everyone wanted to see in the final."*

Martyn Irvine couldn't hide his disappointment after a 14th place in the 20km scratch race at the Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome.

The 2013 world champion, who had retired from the points race on Saturday, said: *"It was horrible, there was nothing good about it, I can't lie, it was a horrible show by myself. I feel bad, I feel like I let the team down. It's character building," he explained afterwards.*

On Saturday Irvine had gotten off to a good start in the gruelling 40km points race and gained an early lap on the field with a number of other riders but then began to struggle and retired with 73 laps remaining.

It was a similar pattern in the shorter scratch race with the Newtownards rider seizing on the opportunity to gain a lap with five others including eventual winner Shane Archbold from New Zealand.

However, he couldn't consolidate and when the pace quickened again Irvine couldn't find the necessary speed to stay with the front group and would soon lose the lap he gained.

At a world cup or world championships each nation is only allowed to enter one rider in the race so that team tactics don't come into play and that it is as fair as it can be but in the Commonwealth Games each country can enter up to three riders and the New Zealanders, amongst others, took advantage.

*"Cycling can be a numbers game and three against one doesn't work but that's no excuse because I've beaten them all before. I need to re-evaluate my season and I'll have to ask a lot of tough questions of myself. It just wasn't there and that's a surprise. I need to find out why,"* added Irvine who will now line out in the road race on Thursday before returning to his training base in Colorado.



*"I'm just gutted I couldn't fly the flag for Northern Ireland."*

Northern Ireland's other track cyclist, Lydia Boylan was 16th in the woman's point's race.

In athletics, Amy Foster is through to the semi-final of the Women's 100m on Monday after securing 2nd place in the heats this evening.

Earlier on Sunday, Gladys Ganiel kicked off athletics for Team NI on Sunday, finishing 12th in the Women's Marathon with a time of 2:40.29. Kenya took top two positions.

*"I am very happy with that performance which was my second best ever time. However, I do regard it as better than my Berlin run where I was timed at 2:39:26 since that course was a lot flatter than Glasgow," said Ganiel.*

She added: *"I went through halfway in 1:18:34 which was taking a bit of a risk as that was PB pace territory. However, I knew that the second half would be difficult because of the wind and some hills, not to mention the humid conditions."*

*"There was no specific plan to run with Hayley Haining (Scotland) but when we were together we decided to work off each other. She helped me at one stage when I went through a bad patch."*

Leon Reid was disqualified from the Men's 100m heats after a false start and Jason Smyth came 5th in his heat.

*"I got out of the blocks really well and was in a good position in the early stages, however, I then tightened up and people started to pass me," explained Smyth.*

He added: *"I was hoping to do better but I still haven't fully recovered from my hamstring injury. The injury has affected my whole season which has confined me to a very small number of races. I am however looking forward to the IPC Athletics European Championships in Swansea soon."*

*"It has been an incredible experience for me to represent Northern Ireland at the Commonwealth Games as I missed out on Delhi because of injury. I will continue to try and bridge the gap between able bodied and Paralympic athletics."*

After stage 1 of the full bore rifles individual event, shooter David Calvert sits in 3rd place, 104-12v, with two more days of competition left in the event.

In table tennis, Team NI beat Scotland 3-1 in the final of the classification event, finishing 13th overall.

The NI netballers lost out in their match against New Zealand 78-29. Speaking after the match, Noleen Lennon said: *"It was fantastic, it's always going to be amazing playing the No.1 team in the world. We had some patches of really strong play and we were even leading them at one point which was amazing."*



She added: *It's a real step up, you can't afford to make mistakes. You need to adapt and adjust and it shows that we can compete with them. Playing against teams like this day in and day out, it's only going to make us better."*

Commenting on sporting an impressive black eye, Lennon said: *"I got caught with an elbow. It caught me just on the rim of my eye and it went up like a balloon. It's not as bad as it looks."*

There were semi-finals for Northern Ireland swimmers Syckerika McMahon and Michael Dawson on Sunday evening but neither qualified. Syckerika McMahon was 13<sup>th</sup> quickest in the 100m breaststroke while Michael Dawson was joint 12<sup>th</sup> in the 50m breaststroke with a time of 28.87.

Bethany Firth was 26th overall in the women's 100m freestyle (59:24) and says her experience in Glasgow will help her when she returns to Paralympic action for Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

*"I am loving this experience but it's much different to what I've been used to. I haven't raced against these girls before but I hope to bring what I've learnt into the Paralympics. The main difference is that a lot of these girls have been here before and they know what they're doing because they've been doing it for years and they are used to this environment."*

Curtis Coulter was 21st fastest in the 100m fly while 14 year-old Danielle Hill was 14th in the women's 200m backstroke.

## **COLLATED RESULTS:**

### **Lawn bowls:**

Men's Triples Semi-final A, Wales vs Northern Ireland (DALY Paul, MULHOLLAND Neil, BOOTH Neil), 12-20. Through to final on Sunday and guaranteed at least a Silver medal.

Women's Singles Semi-final B, EDWARDS Jo NZL vs McMILLEN Catherine NIR, 21-8. Competes for Bronze later on Sunday.

Men's Fours - Section C, Rd 1, Match 1 (DALY Paul, MULHOLLAND Neil, BOOTH Neil, McCLURE Ian) vs Zambia, 11-10

Women's Singles Bronze Medal Match, PIKETH Colleen RSA vs McMILLEN Catherine NIR, 21-10

Men's Singles - Section C, Rd 1, Match 3, McHUGH Martin NIR vs JUNI Peter PNG, 21-18



### **Cycling:**

Men's 20km Scratch Race Qualifying Round, Martyn Irvine, 5<sup>th</sup>

Women's 25km Points Race Finals, BOYLAN Lydia Helene, 16<sup>th</sup>

Men's 20km Scratch Race Finals, Martyn Irvine, 14<sup>th</sup>

### **Athletics:**

Women's Marathon, Gladys Ganiel, (12<sup>th</sup>) 2:40.29

Men's 100m Round 1 - REID Leon, disqualified

Men's 100m Round 1 – Jason Smyth, Heat 4 Men's 100m – 5<sup>th</sup> (10:66)

Women's 100m Round 1, Amy Foster, 2<sup>nd</sup> (11.62)

### **Table tennis:**

Women's Team Classification Final, N. Ireland vs Scotland, 3-1, 13<sup>th</sup> overall

### **Swimming:**

Women's 200m Backstroke, HILL Danielle, 14<sup>th</sup>, 2:26.52

Men's 50m Breaststroke, Michael Dawson, 14<sup>th</sup>, 28.92

Women's 100m Freestyle, Bethany Firth, 26<sup>th</sup>, 59.24

Women's 200m Individual Medley, Sycerika McMahon, 11<sup>th</sup>, 2:16.14

Men's 100m Butterfly, Curtis Coulter, 21<sup>st</sup>, 57.20

Women's 100m Breaststroke, Sycerika McMahon, 10<sup>th</sup>, 1:10.07

### **Netball:**

N. Ireland vs New Zealand, 29-78

### **Boxing:**



Men's Heavy (91kg) Round of 16, BAISTER Warren ENG vs WARD Steven NIR, 2-1

Men's Fly (52kg) Round of 16, DALTON Ruairi NIR vs MWANJWANGO Ezra Paul TAN, 3-0

Men's Light (60kg) Round of 16, FITZPATRICK J NIR vs MOHLEREPE Q LES, 2-1

Men's Light Heavy (81kg) Round of 16, CLARKE Cheavan JAM vs McGLINCHY Sean NIR, 1-2

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