

GYMNASTICS 
IRELAND

EXCHANGE

4th - 9th May 2026



Tuesday 5th May – Thursday 7th May (Online Schedule)

Schedule	Topic
Tuesday, 5 th May 11:00 – 12:15	From Your WHY to Your WHAT, WHEN and HOW: Creating a Vision and Strategy for your Club <i>Prof. Sergio Lara-Bercial</i>
Wednesday, 6 th May 11:00 – 12:00	Garda Vetting and Safeguarding – Key Information for Clubs <i>Deirdre Wixted McPherson</i>
Wednesday, 6 th May 19:30 – 20:30	An Introduction to Diversity and Inclusion with Unconscious Bias Irish Centre for Diversity
Thursday, 7 th May 11:00 – 12:30	Boomerang: Designing Experiences So That They Come Back for More An Introduction to Design Thinking <i>Prof. Fiona Chambers</i>

All Online Exchange Workshops are available to sign up for on your LearnUpon Account.



Friday 8th May 2026

Carlton Hotel Blanchardstown, Dublin

Schedule	Topic
10:30 - 11:00	Registration & Tea/Coffee
11:00 - 11:05	Event Welcome & Opening <i>Ciaran Gallagher, Gymnastics Ireland CEO</i>
11:05 - 11:15	Knowledge Burst
11:15 - 12:00	Leadership Masterclass <i>Marie Gleeson, Former Irish Navy Captain</i>
12:00 - 12:15	What Keeps You Here? <i>Gymnastics Ireland Members</i>
12:15 - 12:30	Increasing Boys' Participation in Gymnastics <i>Rhys McClenaghan</i>
12:30 - 12:45	Erasmus+ Programme Guide for Clubs <i>Léargas</i>
12:45 - 13:45	Lunch & Club Networking
13:45 - 14:15	Parents Decision Making in Sport & Communication <i>Garry Cahill PhD - Chair of Gymnastics Ireland High Performance Committee</i>
14:15 - 14:30	Special Olympics Ireland
14:30 - 14:50	Healthy Snack Ideas & Demonstration <i>Carlton Hotel Head Chef</i>
14:50 - 15:10	Leah Twomey A journey from Gymnast to International Judge
15:10 - 15:30	Break & Tea/Coffee
15:30 - 15:50	Voice of the Gymnast <i>Being a gymnast as an adult Alison Hawkins CGC</i>
15:50 - 16:30	Conor Niland - The Racket <i>Keynote Speaker</i>
16:30	Final comments & event closes

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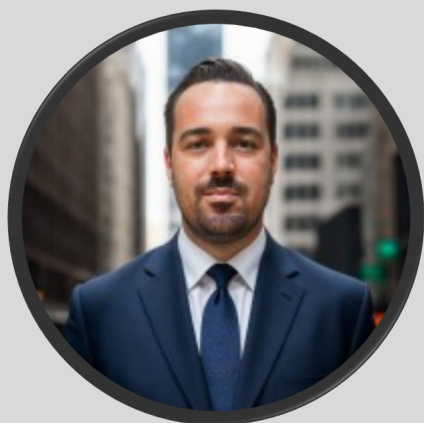


Saturday 9th May 2026

Carlton Hotel Blanchardstown, Dublin

Schedule	Topic
10:00 - 14:30	Crisis Management Masterclass for Clubs International SOS Consulting

Gautier Porot – International SOS Consulting



Speaker Bio

Gautier oversees the Global Crisis management practice within International SOS Consulting and has over 20 years of experience in Corporate Resilience and is internationally recognised as an expert in Crisis Management.

With his Team of Experts around of the world, he supports and accompanies numerous strategic entities, enabling them to prepare, respond and recover effectively to extraordinary situations.

Prior to his role at International SOS, Gautier was the lead organiser and general coordinator for the visit of Pope Francis to Geneva and the 40,000 pilgrims Mass. He operated as a Senior Consultant providing strategic risk management advisory services for individuals in high-risk locations. He served as a Commanding Officer and Army Instructor in the Swiss Armed Forces, but also as a Swiss Guard at the Vatican protecting both HH Jean-Paul II & HH Benedict XVI.

Who is this aimed at?

This session is designed for club owners, managers and senior coaches involved in management decisions.

What to expect

This highly practical and engaging session will cover the key building blocks of effective crisis management, including governance, escalation, roles and responsibilities and communications. Attendees will come away with:

- A clear understanding of what effective leadership in a crisis looks like in practice
- Confidence in how to structure decision-making and coordination under pressure
- Proven crisis management principles translated into real, usable approaches for your club

A standout feature of the Masterclass is a tailor-made scenario exercise developed specifically for Gymnastics Ireland clubs. This is your opportunity to work through a realistic, relevant scenario in real time, testing your coordination, identifying gaps in your current approach and discovering where your club's strengths lie.

Why this matters

Attending this Masterclass is an investment in your club's resilience and in the safety of every gymnast, coach, staff member and parent/guardian who walks through your doors.

Keynote Speakers

Conor Niland	Keynote Speaker Bio
	Conor is one of Ireland's most accomplished and inspiring athletes. His accolades include appearances on the ATP Tour and at Grand Slam tournaments, including qualifying for the first round of Wimbledon and the US Open in 2011. By doing so, he became the first Irishman to qualify for Wimbledon since 1980. He represented Ireland at the highest levels of international tennis, competing in an unprecedented 12 Davis Cup ties, making his first appearance at the age of 18. Other remarkable career highlights include multiple ATP Challenger victories and matches against some of tennis's biggest stars, such as Novak Djokovic, solidifying his legacy as one of Ireland's finest tennis talents. The path to success was never easy for Niland. Throughout his career, he faced the physical and mental challenges of competing at the highest level, navigating injuries, and managing the relentless pressures of elite sport. Yet it was through these challenges that he developed an unshakeable level of resilience. Beyond the tennis court, Niland published his gripping autobiography, <i>The Racket</i>. The book details the reality of being a touring tennis player and the hardships that come with such a lifestyle. In 2024, <i>The Racket</i> won the coveted William Hill Sports Book of the Year award, making him only the third Irishman ever to receive this prestigious honour.

Marie Gleeson



Keynote Speaker Bio

Marie Gleeson is an inspirational figure in the realm of leadership, known for her ability to blend her extensive military experience with her insightful perspectives on resilience and decision-making.

With over two decades of service in the Irish Navy, Marie's journey from a young cadet in 1998 to the Commanding Officer of LE AOIFE, a prestigious position within the naval hierarchy, is a testament to her unwavering commitment and leadership capabilities.

Her experiences navigating the tumultuous waters of the Atlantic Ocean, where she faced high-stakes challenges such as international drug interdictions and the tragic loss of a colleague at sea, have equipped her with a unique understanding of leadership under pressure.



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