



Media statement: For immediate release

**Photos to accompany available upon request*

Olympic Test Event – Providence Team IRL announced

Major events coming up:

- Aquece Rio Intl Regatta (Rio 2016 test event) – 12-22 August 2015, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- 49er & 49erFX World Championships – 17-22 November 2015, Buenos Aires, Argentina (Rio 2016 Olympic qualifier event)
- Laser Radial World Championships – 17-26 November 2015, Al Mussanah Sports City, Oman
- IFDS Combined World Championships – 24 November - 3 December, Melbourne, Australia (Rio 2016 Paralympic qualifier event)

Sailing was one of the first sports to qualify for the Rio 2016 Olympics, with three boats qualifying the nation in Santander, Spain in September 2014 – Laser, Laser Radial and 49er.

Providence Team IRL is hoping to qualify two more boats before the end of 2015 in the 49erFX class for the Olympics and Sonar for the Paralympics.

The test event in Rio gives the Irish sailors a final opportunity to familiarise themselves with the environment they will experience at the Olympics next year.

The press conference featured Providence Team IRL sailors including Irish Olympian, Annalise Murphy (4th in London Olympics 2012); 2014 ISAF World Cup Silver Medalist Ryan Seaton (49er class); 10 time Paralympian John Twomey with crew; as well as Olympic hopefuls Andrea Brewster and Saskia Tidey (49er FX class) as they prepare for their upcoming Olympic qualification event.

In addition to the Providence Team IRL, the conference also featured members of the ISA Development Academy; all campaigning for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games but with an outside chance of upsetting the odds and qualifying for Rio.

Also announced was the news that Ireland's Paralympic Sonar team will attempt to qualify for the Rio 2016 Games at the IFDS Combined World Championships in November in Melbourne, Australia. Helm, John Twomey from Kinsale will be hoping to qualify for his 11th successive Paralympic Games.

Providence Team IRL

Annalise Murphy (Laser Radial)

James Espey (Laser)

Ryan Seaton & Matt McGovern (49er)

Andrea Brewster & Saskia Tidey (49er FX)

John Twomey, Ian Costello, Austin O'Carroll (Paralympic Sonar)

The Irish Olympic Team had their most successful Olympics for thirty years at London 2012 with a 4th, 10th and 14th place finishes. Their target is to build on this success using the support of world class coaches, and following a structured and comprehensive programme of preparation in advance of Rio 2016.



Speaking at today's announcement, Providence Resources Chief Executive, Tony O'Reilly said:
"Providence Resources is delighted with the great success the team has had on the water over the past 12 months, and in particular, it was great to see three of our teams qualify for Rio in Santander last September. We are very proud to sponsor these world class athletes and we look forward to working in partnership with the team in order that they can achieve their goals in Rio in 2016"

Commenting on the team and their progress, ISA Performance Director, James O'Callaghan said:
"Our programme of training and preparation for Rio 2016 is reaching a climax with these major events coming up in 2015 and our world class coaches are providing the team with the guidance required. This would not be possible without the support of Providence Resources and the Irish Sports Council, as we all aim for success in Rio next year"

ENDS

Note to editors

Matt McGovern and James Espey unfortunately could not be with us today as they are already in Rio preparing for the event.

Interviews with the Providence Team IRL sailors; ISA Performance Director James O'Callaghan; and Tony O'Reilly (Providence Resources Chief Executive) may be arranged upon request.

For more information please contact:

Alec Elliott | Irish Sailing Association
Tel: +353 (0)87 7064018 |
alec.elliott@sailing.ie

Pauline McAlester | Murray Consultants
Tel: +353 (0)1 498 0300 |
pmcalester@murrayconsultants.ie

About ISA Performance & Team

The ISA Performance Department guides sailing programmes from junior through to Olympic and Paralympic. There are currently 102 sailors training as part of the ISA Performance Pathway. All of these sailors are closely monitored and follow a tailored strength and conditioning programme managed by Sports Med Ireland in addition to receiving regular coaching on the water.

Online: www.isaperformance.ie | facebook.com/ISAPerformance | [@ISA_Performance](https://twitter.com/ISA_Performance)

About our sponsor, Providence Resources

Providence Resources P.l.c. is an Irish based Oil and Gas Exploration Company with a portfolio of appraisal and exploration assets located offshore Ireland and the UK. Since its formation, Providence has built a diversified portfolio of oil and gas exploration licences and concessions with the key focus being the pursuit of exploration and appraisal interests offshore Ireland. The Company's board and management have a well-established background in the oil and gas business having worked closely with many major companies throughout the world. Providence has previously and continues to work with leading companies including ExxonMobil, Repsol, ENI, Petronas and Cairn.

Website: www.providenceresources.com