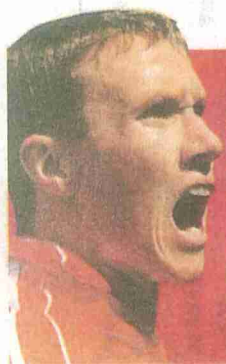


# Irish Independent



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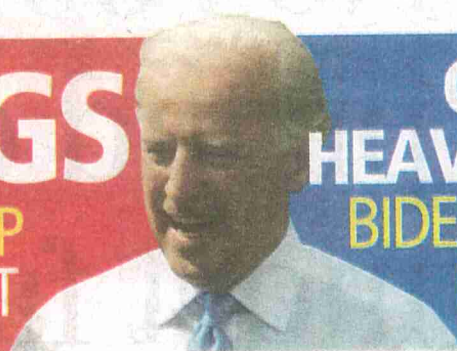
METRO EDITION 25 Aug 08



## COMEBACK KINGS

### CORK

LATE REBEL BLAST SETS UP  
KERRY REPLAY SEE SPORT



## OBAMA'S HEAVY HITTER

### BIDEN DRAFTED

IN P28 & 29

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# Minister admits we need new Lisbon poll

## Fresh treaty row brews after cardinal voices Europe fears

**Senan Molony**  
Deputy Political Editor

EUROPEAN Affairs Minister Dick Roche raised the prospect of a second Lisbon Treaty referendum last night, saying he believes it is "the appropriate response" to the country's continuing political crisis.

Mr Roche's controversial comments, in an interview with the *Irish Independent*, came as the Catholic Primate of All Ireland yesterday voiced fears that some Christians had voted against the treaty because the EU was becoming ever more secular in its outlook.

Mr Roche said: "My personal view is that a referendum is the appropriate response to the position we are in. This is very much a personal view at this stage."

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He added: "If we want to retain our position as a constructive EU member state, we cannot simply sit on our hands, as some would have us

do, and keep saying that 'No' means 'No'."

Mr Roche is the first minister to publicly suggest an eventual re-run of the treaty referendum, defeated last June.

Some members of Government may be relieved that the unpalatable truth is now being aired - but the minister's intervention will dismay 'No' campaigners, many of whom had predicted after their victory that the Government would not heed the result.

The minister sought to downplay any controversy about his remarks by saying the Government would make no decision on the matter until after its detailed analysis of the referendum defeat had been completed and considered.

A government spokesman

Continued on page 12

## As good as gold Silver star Kenny celebrates



AFTER a two-week Beijing odyssey, Ireland's Olympic boxing medal winners will fly into Dublin to a heroes' welcome tomorrow.

Congratulations flooded in yesterday after Dubliner Kenny

Egan (26) was presented with his silver medal.

Our picture shows the Irish captain kissing the gold that went to his Chinese opponent Zhang Xiaoping.

Belfast's Paddy Barnes was al-

so presented with his bronze medal, while Darren Sutherland was given his bronze on Saturday.

**SILVER LINING: PAGES 2-6 AND  
SPORTS SUPPLEMENT**

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## Olympic Games Silver lining

## Funding increase reflected in haul of medals

Louise Hogan

IRELAND'S late triumph in the medals stakes was last night being attributed to the success of boxing's high-performance programme which has benefited from a 55pc funding hike.

And one of the country's greatest performances in decades was being touted as a "significant platform" to build on for the 2012 Olympics in London.

Funding was more than doubled to €34m in the four-year run-up to the Beijing Olympics following the 2004 Athens games, where rider Cian O'Connor had to hand back Ireland's only gold medal after his horse tested positive for banned substances.

The development of the Irish boxing talent was one of the beneficial results of the high-performance programme directed by Gary Keegan. Figures provided to the *Irish Independent* showing a 55pc increase in funding from €400,000 in the year following Athens to €620,000 in 2008.

The Irish Sports Council (ISC) confirmed focus had been placed on sports with a proven history of competitive performance, although other more diverse sports were also funded.

Speaking from Beijing, Dominic O'Rourke, the president of the Irish Amateur Boxing Association (IABA) said it had taken eight years to get the high-performance unit in place.

He said the unit, funded through the ISC, had played a "very important" role in nurturing the talent being developed by the clubs throughout the country. "The high-performance programme has paid off

'The programme has paid off for us. This is only really the start of it'

for us," he said. "This is only really the start of it," he said.

Mr O'Rourke said he had "no doubt" that the Government could continue to provide funding for it in the coming years. He said the success would "rebound right through the sporting world".

Mr O'Rourke said there were many good young boxers coming up through the system. He said plans were already in place for the 2012 Olympics for which they had "high hopes".

## Investment

The ISC, which distributes the Government funding to athletes, confirmed it would continue building on the high-performance investment system, targeting focus sports.

The ISC's Paul McDermott said an analysis of the team's performance would take place in the coming months, similar to the aftermath of Athens and Sydney games.

"We won't be short of reviews," Mr McDermott said, describing the body as "upbeat" after the Beijing games.

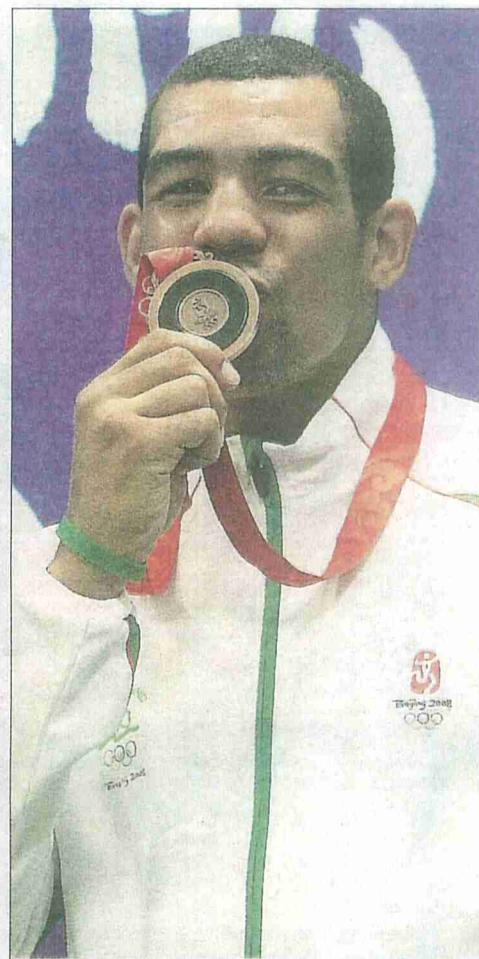
The ISC spokesman said he had been left "baffled" by criticism from Ireland's Olympic chef de mission (team manager) Dermot Heneghan, who said the team's "grim" performance needed to be closely examined.

Mr Heneghan told Newstalk that the funding being ploughed into the sports wasn't delivering the results. Under the high-performance investment, funding increased from €1.95m in 2002 up to €5.87m this year.

Fine Gael's sports spokeswoman Olivia Mitchell said the money delivered to the boxing programme had been "well spent".

"My own view is if you are putting money into sport it should be put into the primary schools as you need a big pool to choose from," she said. However, she said there had been no extra funds delivered to the Olympic sports this year.

According to the Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism, the Government will continue to enhance the facilities and supports with the first phase the sports campus at Abbotstown due to be developed.



Boxers Kenneth Egan and Darren Sutherland (right) kiss their Olympic medals following their success in Beijing. Both fighters benefitted from a recent 55pc hike in State funding for high-performance sports with a 'proven history of competitive performance'.

## Olympic funding

**Olympic Council of Ireland** – received €3.413m from 2001 to 2008

**Paralympic Council of Ireland** – received €2.216m from 2001 to 2009

**Irish Institute of Sport** – received €1.205m from 2006 to 22-08-2008

## International carding scheme:

direct grants for elite athletes

2001	€1.573m
2002	€1.960m
2003	€2.248m
2004	€2.271m
2005	€1.862m
2006	€2.118m
2007	€2.277m
2008	€2.500m

## High performance investment to focus sports began in 2002 and was initially known as the Athens enhancement programme

2002	€1.950m
2003	€1.811m
2004	€2.160m
2005	€3.721m
2006	€4.536m
2007	€6.568m
2008	€5.872m

## High performance investment in sports qualified for the games

	Athletics	Badminton	Boxing	Canoe	Cycling	Fencing	Hockey	Rowing	Sailing	Shooting	Swimming	Total
2005	€324,000	€80,000	€400,000	€254,000	€180,000	€14,000	€300,000	€400,000	€400,000	€65,000	€190,000	€2,607,000
2006	€505,000	€137,250	€527,436	€307,017	€240,000	€15,000	€460,000	€470,000	€370,000	€120,000	€210,000	€3,361,703
2007	€744,000	€130,000	€614,000	€379,000	€405,000	€15,000	€750,000	€780,000	€480,000	€120,000	€350,000	€4,767,000
2008	€750,000	€140,000	€620,000	€340,000	€405,000	€12,000	€700,000	€720,000	€480,000	€110,000	€350,000	€4,627,000
Total	€2,323,000	€487,250	€2,161,436	€1,280,017	€1,230,000	€56,000	€2,210,000	€2,370,000	€1,730,000	€415,000	€1,100,000	€15,362,703

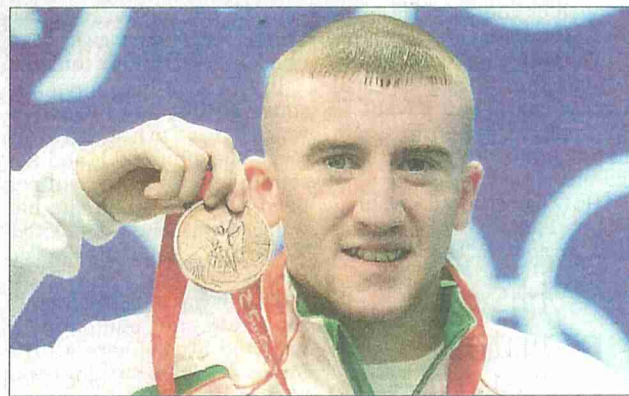
## Belfast's finest changes mind on angry post-fight vow and collects his bronze

Jonny Stones and Grainne Cunningham

BELFAST boxer Paddy Barnes has collected his bronze Olympics medal in Beijing despite a bitter post-fight vow to let them "keep" it.

The 21-year-old pugilist, who was devastated after he failed to score a single point in his final bout, changed his mind and was all smiles as he picked up the medal at the awards ceremony, watched by a sizeable Irish contingent.

Although Barnes' performance won him praise from boxing pundits, the all-Chinese judging panel failed to award him any points; while his opponent, China's Zou Shiming, notched up 15 over the intensely contested rounds.



Ireland's Paddy Barnes proudly displays his Olympic bronze medal yesterday. RAY MCMAHON/SPORTSFILE

After the result, Barnes was quick to concede that the right man had won but he was so disgusted about the points imbalance that he told the Olympic Committee they could "keep their bronze medal".

Meanwhile, his trainer

Gerry Storey blasted Northern Ireland sports authorities for failing to give the fighter proper support.

The coach hit out at governing sports bodies for offering too little too late to the boxer.

Mr Storey's Holy Family Boxing Club in Belfast ran out of funds, sending Barnes to Team Ireland's Olympic training camp in Dublin, before the fighter's family stumped up the cash to cover his travel costs.

## Preparation

Mr Storey (71), who has trained four Olympic fighters before Paddy Barnes, believes the boxer's preparation for the Olympics was marred by a lack of sponsorship, which arrived only weeks before his trip to China.

"It was a hard struggle for his family who covered almost every cost of his preparation for the Olympics. His community from north Belfast also put their hands in their pockets to raise funds to help Paddy," Mr Storey said.



## Olympic Games Silver lining

'I believe I'm the best light-heavyweight on the planet. I just don't have the medal to prove it'

Victorious boxers to get heroes' welcome at airport



Zhang Xiaoping, left, of China and Ireland's Kenny Egan drop to canvas at the end of the light-heavyweight final in Beijing, Zhang in celebration and Egan in despair.

### Shane Hickey

IRELAND'S Olympic medal winners will fly into Dublin to heroes' welcomes from the public tomorrow, but there are as yet no plans for a State reception.

Congratulations flooded in from across the political spectrum yesterday after Kenny Egan (26) was presented with his silver medal in Beijing.

Belfast's Paddy Barnes was also presented with his bronze medal, while Darren Sutherland was given his bronze on Saturday.

The Olympic Council of Ireland (OCI) is due to host a ceremony in the airport tomorrow evening to welcome them home.

But a government spokesperson said there were no official plans "as yet", although Sports Minister Martin Cullen is expected to welcome the athletes home at the airport.

"It is too early to say at this stage because we haven't engaged with the relevant parties," said the spokesperson.

Yesterday, the President and the Taoiseach led the tributes to Egan, who collected Ireland's only silver medal.

Mary McAleese said: "The people of Ireland are uplifted by this outstanding achievement which continues a tradition of Irish Olympic boxing excellence dating back to 1952."

"This is such a proud moment for Kenny, his family, friends and supporters - a moment in which all of us can gladly share."

### Inspirational

Brian Cowen said: "Kenny fought a brave fight and gave everything in a wonderful bout of top-class boxing."

"Not only did Kenny do us proud in the ring but he was also an inspirational captain throughout the whole boxing tournament. Kenny and our two other medalists, Paddy Barnes and Darren Sutherland, can be truly be proud of their achievements."

Mr Cullen praised Egan on his medal win, while Fine Gael's sports spokeswoman Olivia Mitchell said the high performance training used by the boxing team should be used as a template.

Labour's Joan Burton praised the boxers' "remarkable success" in the face of "intense competition".

Egan bet €100 at 6/1 that he would win a medal before the Games.

Yesterday, BoyleSports said they would treble the winnings, meaning he will pick up €1,900 - to be given to his boxing club in Neilstown.

# Egan's golden goal foiled by the China syndrome



VINCENT HOGAN  
in Beijing

flooded the Workers' Gymnasium yesterday - cries of "China, China, China" spilling forth like a mantra.

"I believe I'm the best light-heavyweight on the planet," said a devastated Egan, having collapsed to his knees at the end of the fight. "I just don't have the medal to prove it."

The boxers made it Ireland's most successful Olympics since Barcelona '92, with Egan's silver and bronze medals for Darren Sutherland and Paddy Barnes.

Only three previous Irish boxers have won Olympic silvers, John McNally (Helsinki '52), Fred Tiedt (Melbourne '56) and Wayne McCullough (Barcelona '92).

But Egan had hoped to follow Michael Carruth's example, despite a scoring system that had been the source of salty rumour and debate for the duration of the tournament.

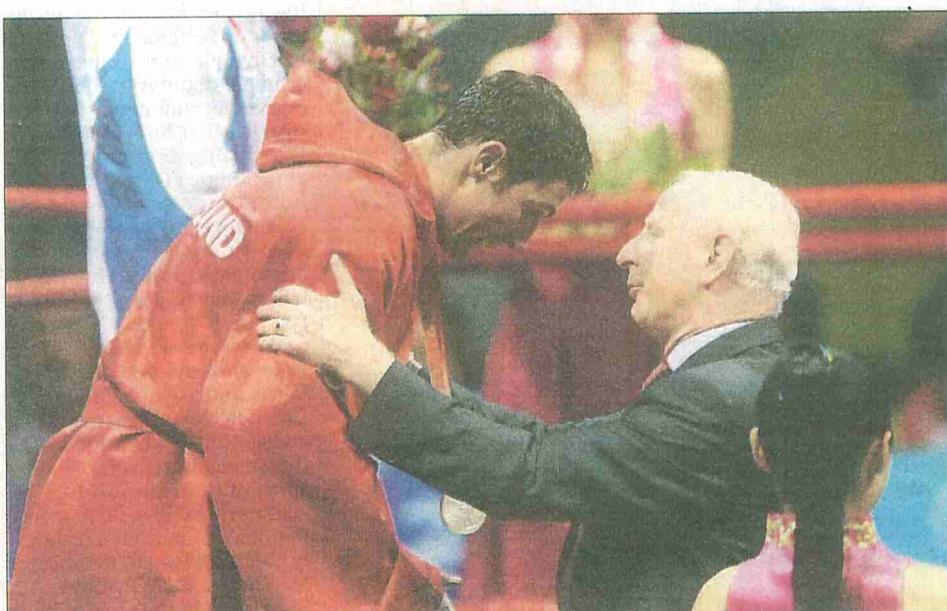
In four previous fights at these Games, Egan conceded an aggregate of seven scores. In other words, an average of less than one per round.

### Defence

Yet, against a counter-punching opponent yesterday, the judges seemed to see his defence as a sieve.

British light-heavy Tony Jeffries, who Egan beat in Friday's semi-final, expressed the view that the Irishman had won the gold by "two or three scores".

It was, though, just a niggle in the small-print of an Olympics which saw American



Kenny Egan is presented with his silver medal by Patrick Hickey, president of the Olympic Council of Ireland in Beijing yesterday. RAY MC MANUS/SPORTSFILE

swimmer Michael Phelps win an unprecedented eight gold medals and the Jamaican sprint sensation, Usain Bolt, claim three golds in three world-record times.

For China, the propaganda value of Beijing '08 has been virtually incalculable. The Games were terrorism-free and the hosts' harvesting of 100 medals, without any home athlete failing a dope test, fuelled 17 days of nationalistic fervour.

Human rights issues and environmental concerns were set aside as global leaders joined

The British fighter Egan beat in the semis thought he won the final by 'two or three scores'

the pageant. This was the land of 1.3 billion people, 300 million of whom are said to exist on less than €1 a day, announcing its place as a new world power.

State-sponsored and heavily policed, it was a staggering show, delivering an endless red tide of celebration for the hosts. Those swept away by the force of the surf were barely seen, let alone noticed.

As Kenny Egan put it: "If it had been in Dublin, I don't know if he (Zhang) would have won that fight. Deep down, in my heart of hearts, I feel I won."