

# GOING FOR GOLD

*New performance-monitoring software has made it easier for GAA teams and Crystal Palace to achieve their goals, and helped Katie Taylor win gold at the 2012 Olympics. Ann Bruen, chief technology officer of Dundalk-based Health & Sport Technologies, talks about her winning formula.*

## What's your system for analysing athlete performance and how does it work?

"It's a monitoring system that allows athletes and coaches, clubs and associations, to manage all elements of a sports performance. We provide a platform that helps athletes log information about their training, their matches and competitions, injury and rehab programmes. We have psychology and lifestyle elements to it: a social networking area where they can talk to other athletes in the same group. There's a goal-setting tool too."

### Is this an app?

"We have a web version and a mobile version that works on all smartphones. It's not an app that you can download from the store, but a mobile version you can download to the homescreen on each of your different type of phones and effectively access it like an app. It works on Blackberry, Android, Windows, iPhone."

## What aspects of an athlete's performance does it analyse?

"We look at four different areas: psychology, physical, technical, and emotional areas. We integrate that with goal-setting and planning. On a daily basis, an athlete might log their 'Body and Mind' settings. You wake up in the morning and you can use your phone to take your breath and heart rate. Things like that are useful for athletes because they can indicate training overload, dehydration and so forth. We have slider scales where you can judge how you are feeling: your mood, sleep quality, etc."

### How did Katie Taylor use the system?

"Katie used the system in the build-up to the world championships and the Olympics. Pete [Taylor, her father and coach] is with her all the time so he probably does a lot of this stuff already, but he had it in spreadsheets, files or emails, bits of pieces all over the place, so he was able to have all this information collated in one area. He had much easier access to analyse all her training, keep her injury-free, and provide a maximum training platform for her to succeed."

## What's Pete Taylor's involvement in the software?

"Pete originally got a demonstration of the



software and initially just wanted a few tweaks for his requirements, specifically for boxing. Pete was a big fan of the system. He's obviously a very knowledgeable guy, so we have him on board now as technical advisor."

## Crystal Palace FC also implemented the tech. Does this suit numerous sports?

"The core of the whole system is common to all sports. Each sport might have some detailed changes in match analysis and results and in the area of training."

## Is this just for competitive sportspeople, or can someone hoping to keep fit use it too?

"We have a more generic multi-sport package, which would be easier to use for the normal athlete. We're working with NUI Galway and a University in Canada on that."

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