

SPECIAL FEATURE:**INTERVIEW WITH CHRISTIAN O' BRIEN, ALL-IRELAND BOXING CHAMPION AND PROUD JOEYS STUDENT**

By Conor O' Reilly

Christian is a second year student in St. Joseph's and is also an All-Ireland Champion in Boxing. When the school learnt of this, we felt Christian deserved recognition for his achievements.

I interviewed Christian about his victory, his gruelling training routine and his life outside of boxing.



Christian's moment of victory over his opponent



When and why did you first become interested in boxing?

I was interested since I was very young. I watched it on the television. I felt that it was one way to escape from reality. I started boxing when I was nine years old. I am a member of the Corinthians Boxing Club.

What does your training programme entail?

I train for four days a week: Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday. I start off with a warm-up for ten minutes, followed by skipping for ten minutes. For half an hour, I punch punching bags and then box pads (the mittens worn on the hands of the instructor). After that I spar against an opponent for half an hour to an hour. I then do a strength/conditioning session.

Gosh, that sounds like it takes a lot of hard work and dedication!

Definitely, it's not a sport that you can play without having commitment or dedication. It also clashes with school work, particularly the Summer Exams. However, I think it's a great sport and would recommend playing it as it gives you discipline. You also make lots of friends.

Part of the discipline is sticking to a consistent diet plan. I can't really eat whatever I like. Instead, I eat more or less healthy protein. When starting off, it can be difficult to stick to the diet, but it gets easier as it goes on. It's crucial to have a

good diet, though. You need to be fit to be able to last two hours training.

My parents have been a great support to me. They help me with training and with my diet. They also help me when I'm injured by getting the right treatment.

What have been your boxing achievements?

I won two League Titles, two Dublin Championship Titles, one Leinster Title and, greatest of all, an All-Ireland Title.

Where would you like to go in the future?

The next step would be to go to the Europeans. In order to qualify for the Europeans, you have to go through the Cadets. They're similar to another All-Ireland but are harder. You have to box against people a year older than you. After the Europeans is the World Championship. It is my dream that I would one day go to the Olympics. I have dreamed of the Olympics since I first set foot in the club.

We would all here at *Joey's* like to wish Christian every success in his boxing future.

