

Imperial star athlete selected to represent Great Britain in two different sports

Sports Editor Konrad Hohendorf

What follows is a few questions I put to one of Imperials most high performing athlete, Christy Chan, who recently became a GB athlete in two very different sports:

Who are you?

Hi everyone! I'm Christy, a third year EIE undergraduate. I'm from Hong Kong, and went to an International school there, Hong Kong International School. When I was thirteen, I moved to the UK to attend boarding school, Sevenoaks School. However, I disliked boarding at the school so became a day pupil shortly after. I compete in two sports, target rifle shooting and powerlifting. In target rifle shooting, I compete in two disciplines, smallbore and fullbore. I was recently selected to compete for Great Britain in the Drew Match, an international smallbore prone rifle competition for U21's. This year, in fullbore, I won the Young Rifleman's Aggregate (best scores for my class at 300 yards, 500 yards, and 600 yards). In powerlifting, I was also recently selected to compete for Great Britain in the World Junior Bench Press Championships, in the u52kg category, but this fell through due to COVID.

What's your sport background?

I started shooting when I was thirteen at Sevenoaks, as a hobby and as something to fill time and to distract me from

being homesick. I did this once a week for two years, until year eleven, where I chose it as my 'sports option' meaning I did it three or more times a week. I was pretty bad at shooting for the first four years, until in my final year of school, it all just clicked, and I suddenly got much better, being selected for England in the Schools' match.

When I joined Imperial, using the facilities provided by Imperial College Rifle & Pistol Club, I used the knowledge I acquired over the past few years to try and improve without any coaching or help, which was difficult, but I persevered! In my first year, I came 6th in female BUCS short

range, and last year I came 2nd beating some GB shots as well! In my last year of school, I needed something to fill in the time during my free periods. Instead of spending all of my time at the shooting range, I decided to go to the gym – it was nothing serious until I joined ICBarell at university. In second year, I continued powerlifting, and with the support of my coach and ICBarell, I was able to make progress, competing in my first competition in January 2020, qualifying for British Junior Nationals, and National Bench Press Champion-

ships. I competed in the bench press championships in February 2020, came 2nd in my weight class, and was subsequently selected for GB!

How do you balance university and sport?

To be perfectly honest with you, I don't know. I meticulously plan my time and try to stay organized and on top of things. I do tend to wake up at a decent time, and just get grinding away at work/training.

Have you ever experienced racism or sexism in the world of sport?

In powerlifting, in short, no. ICBarell is a super diverse club, we have a 60% female committee! I am super glad to see this, and the fact that we have come so far as a new club (founded in 2016), to the extent where I have never experienced racism or sexism in powerlifting.

In shooting, it's a different story. People in the sport tend to come from private school backgrounds, so everyone in the sport tends to be posh, white, and mostly male. Smallbore more so than fullbore; last year in the National Smallbore Rifle Association's Bisley Meeting, I was the only person of colour on camp, and was subsequently interviewed for their video!

Saying this, I have not not felt welcomed – there are just a few times where the odd racist joke or comment comes out, without a modern-day filter! In fullbore, although the majority are as I described above, there's a lot more diversity. The people around are very supportive and always willing to help, and racism/sexism is very much less of a thing than you would expect! However, I must add that being a female in two male dominated sports is quite challenging. You have to assert yourself, otherwise you'll be forgotten and trampled



Christy Chan collecting her trophy for the Young Rifleman's Aggregate

over! As long as you act confidently, you should be perfectly fine!

How has COVID affected your life?

In March, when things started getting worse with COVID, I flew back home to Hong Kong. Just prior to this, I was still entered into some competitions, so decided to shoot all of them in one day. Here, in the midst of all the stress, I was sexually assaulted by a coach at the time. I said nothing and finished my shooting, because I had a flight to catch in 4 hours. It severely impacted me and I underwent therapy to try and overcome this. I am in the process of recovering. Gun laws in Hong Kong are extremely strict, so I wasn't able to shoot. During my mandatory 14 day home quarantine I thought I could just wait and come back to training at the gym, however the gyms closed due to a second wave! I had to make do with a pull up bar and some resistance bands, but needless to say, I lost a lot of strength.

When the gyms reopened again in April, I went hard, and nearly injured myself squatting. I kept going at it though, set a new PB, and then the gyms closed again (third wave). The gyms were closed until I came back to the UK at the beginning of September, for some



Christy Chan (second women from left) with ICBarell

SPORT

CONTINUED

trial cards to get into the GB team. Somehow made it to the top of the list and was subsequently selected! In full-bore, it was a different story. I hadn't shot fullbore in a year, rocked up, had a bit of a breakdown (due to the traumatic event that happened in March), but still managed to shoot well on 2 of the 4 days, and subsequently won the Young Rifleman's Aggregate! In some ways, although I'm very sorry to hear of the people affected by the current coronavirus outbreak, COVID has been a blessing in disguise

for me. It has given me the chance to take a step back and slow down, focusing on relationships (with my dog), and enabled me to improve my mental health by not placing so much pressure on myself.

What's your favourite thing to do outside of sport or university work?

Socialize with food! The sports I do are pretty individual, so it's incredibly important for my mental health to speak and socialize with friends. Hong Kong culture is based entirely around food, so I just love getting together with friends over good food.

Credits: NRA UK/NSRA



ICBARBELL IS A SUPER DIVERSE CLUB, WE HAVE A 60% FEMALE COMMITTEE!

What advice do you have for aspiring athletes?

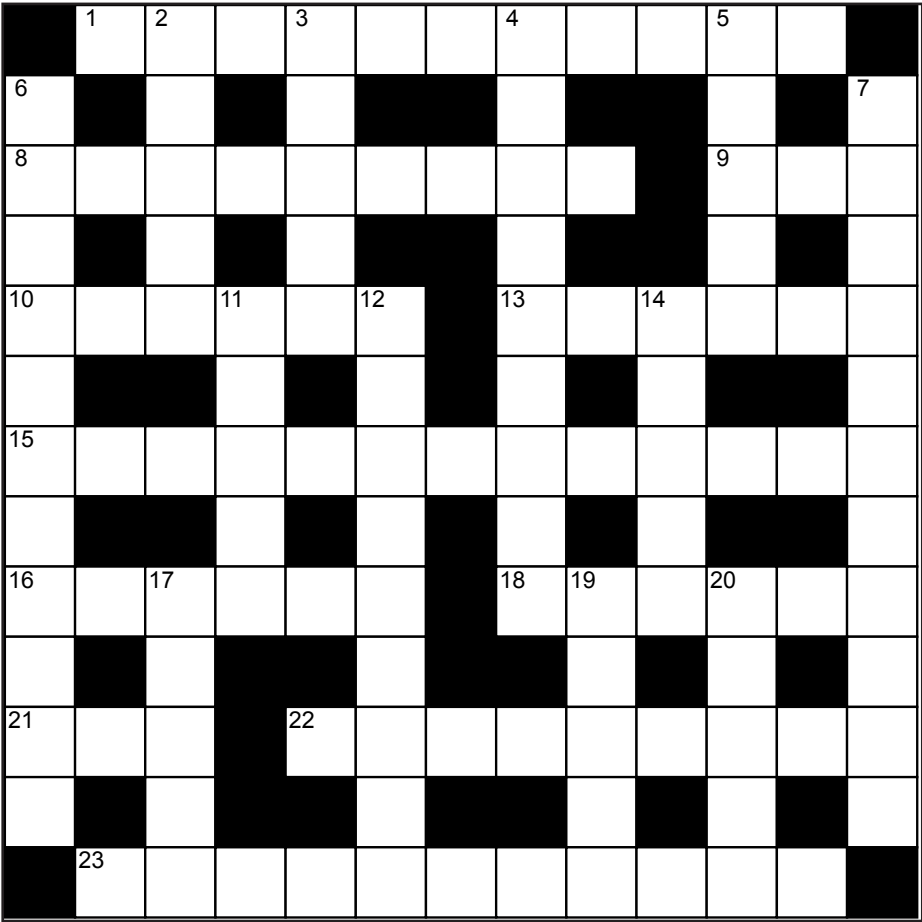
Keep your chin up! You're already doing really well by participating in sport alongside an Imperial degree! Be sure to manage your time well and remember that recovery is just as important as training. Learn to enjoy and trust the process, and remember it's about what you learn along the way, and not the outcome.

If you have been through a traumatic experience, then please do reach out to somebody who is in a position to help. This can either be your tutor, a counsellor or even a friend. At the end of the day your health, specifically your mental health, is one of the most important things to maintain in life so make sure you prioritise it.

If you know of somebody who you think we should interview about their sporting achievements, no matter what sport, then please do get in touch at Sports.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Felix cryptic Crossword No. 3

Serendip



Across

- 1 Faithful East Enders draw the line here? Bollocks! (6,5)
- 8 Intersite fires spell trouble for corporation (9)
- 9 Sign of a railway crossing (3)
- 10 Little digger allowed to reverse outside bank (6)
- 13 Suggestion of divesting Amir's supply? (6)
- 15 Asian flower suit is initially tailored for businesswoman (13)
- 16 Not all of stoned gearheads are nervous (2,4)
- 18 Georgia's first two baby twins (6)
- 21 Nothing odd in muezzin's piece by Israeli construction (3)
- 22 In Italy, miss swing oddly before putting back one type of club (9)
- 23 Regal eatery blend? (4,4,3)

- 5 In the region of Corsica but not so exotic (5)
- 6 Five routinely out to lunch, taking little Quentin to throwing practice (for dummies)! (11)
- 7 Dishevelled city slammer uniform (11)
- 11 Injury that hurts back and German (5)
- 12 Animal issue in Google's first environmental violation (9)
- 14 Striking case of damsels in distress here once? (5)
- 17 Heather's family time interrupted by Imperial College (5)
- 19 Jet set boy around Pole after Spain, briefly (5)
- 20 Something organic for one wretched dime (5)

Down

- 2 Trump no longer running party (5)
- 3 Lighter muscle (5)
- 4 Cheating son becomes slipshod, finally going down (9)

Last week's solution



Enjoy solving cryptics? Head over to Page 34-5 for more puzzles and the chance to enter our clue writing competition and be featured in next week's issue.