

NIAMH MCEVOY SADDLING UP FOR STARDOM & SUCCESS

NIAMH MCEVOY (PRONOUNCED NEEVE) KICKED OFF HER SHOWJUMPING ADVENTURE IN 2019; SHE GALLOPED HER WAY TO TEAM GOLD AT THE FEI EUROPEAN PONY CHAMPIONSHIPS IN STRZEGOM, POLAND. AND IN 2022, SHE SWAPPED PONIES FOR JUNIOR TEAM BRONZES AT THE EUROPEAN JUMPING CHAMPIONSHIPS IN SUNNY OLIVA, SPAIN.



That same October, McEvoy jumped into the big leagues with her senior Nations Cup debut at CSI3* Vejer in Spain. Not only did she make her debut, she also rode her horse 'Templepatrick Welcome Limmerick' to victory in the 1.55m Grand Prix.

When she's not busy making fences look like mere stepping stones, McEvoy dazzles at the RDS Dublin Horse Show, where she has become one of the young stars of the event. Riding 'Flora du Mensil', she snagged the CSIO5* 1.50m 'Dublin Stakes for award of the Wylie Perpetual Trophy' - a title that sounds fancy enough to make a crown blush - and impressed the crowd with her fancy footwork and a sprinkle of horsey magic. And let's not forget, she's also a bit of a multi-horse whisperer, winning several national classes during the five-day Irish extravaganza.

But who is McEvoy when she's not soaring over jumps? We wanted to find out more about this talented equestrian, her passions, quirks, and what fuels her fire beyond the arena.

Are all the horses you ride owned by Greg Broderick Ballypatrick Stables?

Yes, most of them are. I've been working at the Ballypatrick Stables full-time for three years now, jumped straight into it after finishing school. Before that, I was kind of doing a bit of part-time work, traveling up and down the country. I'm from the other side of Ireland, so I've had quite the journey. Greg is also my trainer.

Are all the horses you competed with at the RDS Dublin Horse Show, Irish-bred horses?

Most of them are. They're mostly bred here in Ireland, either owned by Greg or by people connected to him. I've also jumped a couple of horses for my family - the Lismore Stables - but the majority are Greg's. Greg's sister Cheryl does a lot of light breeding, so a lot of the young horses I've competed in the national classes were bred by her. It's really special.

How do you pick a horse? Which ones suit you?

There are so many horses here, and Greg's got a real talent for matching riders with the right horses. He has a great eye for it. I definitely lean towards the more spirited horses, those sharp, blood-type horses. I love a bit of a cruiser ride too. Being based in Ballypatrick has taught me to ride all kinds: big, slower horses, and more energetic, blood horses. We try to keep them all as conventional as possible so we can help them perform their best.



You've taken a year off to focus on riding; is this your final decision and competing professionally will be your chosen path?

Absolutely. When I finished school, I initially applied for accountancy and business management, and my parents were probably hoping I'd go to university. But honestly, I kept saying, "Just one more year," and here I am, definitely sticking with horses.

How do you handle the pressure?

Pressure is part of the game, but I believe it's a privilege to compete at this level. In Ireland and worldwide, we get used to it from a young age. The biggest help is having a fantastic team around me. Greg is brilliant especially during warm-ups and big classes. He really boosts your confidence. Then there are also so many reliable people on the ground; they take a lot of stress off my shoulders.

Do Greg or your family invest in mental prep or sports psychology?

We've done a bit of that through the Young Riders Academy, working with Poppy Blandford. But honestly, I haven't delved too deep into it, just tried to stay focused and positive.

If you could ride any horse in the world, which one would it be?

Dynamix De Belheme. Definitely.

If you could swap lives with any celebrity for a day, who would it be and why?

I'd love to swap with Laura Kraut. She's always been one of my idols, and I think it'd be fascinating to see how she manages everything. Plus, her performance at the Rolex Grand Prix of Ireland last Sunday was just incredible.

What did you think of that Grand Prix especially since out of 40 riders, only Kraut cleared?

It was super interesting. The course was tough and the tension kept building. But Laura made it look so easy; she's unbelievable. Honestly, it was one of the most exciting Grand Prixes I've watched.

What's your go-to pump-up song before a competition?

Maybe Eye of the Tiger?

Any guilty pleasure TV shows or TikTok trends?

I'm not a huge TV person, but I started watching Yellowstone slowly. I've only watched the first episode so far. I do check TikTok, but I wouldn't say I'm up-to-date with the latest trends.

If you weren't riding, what do you think you'd be doing right now?

Probably something sporty. I've always been active. Or maybe studying, since I love sports and staying busy.

Where's your dream showjumping destination?

Aachen, without a doubt. And I'd love to jump in the Nations Cup or the Grand Prix there someday. But if I had to pick anywhere in Ireland, it'd be Dublin. The Dublin show is my favourite of the year,

Tea or coffee in the morning?

Neither, actually.

If your horse could have a social media account, what would they post about?

Their adventures! They love hacking out with

their friends, so I imagine they'd do a daily vlog of their escapades.

What emoji best describes your personality in the ring?

The fighter emoji.

What's in your show bag that might surprise people?

Rosary beads, just to keep me safe.

How would you sum up your riding style in three words?

Kind, feeling, determined.

What's the best piece of advice you've received at a show?

To watch everything, learn from everyone.

Who in the horse world, past or present, would you love to have dinner with?

Probably John Whitaker. He's an absolute legend. I think it'd be fascinating to hear his stories and interesting to see how the dinner goes. 🍷

Niamh McEvoy was born on 6 April, 2004.

Niamh is a Gaelic name and is pronounced Neeve

