

Kokkolan ammattiopiston opettaja

The first thing that comes to mind is that Irish soccer players play with more intensity. From my experience of living here I can attribute this to two reasons, the Irish, are by nature gregarious, they are very outgoing, very sociable, they work hard and play hard, and this is also true of how they play sport. Comparing to Scandinavians who are well organised, they plan, and take more time to explain team tactics, the Irish are more about motivation, being in good physical condition, and just going out and playing hard.

The second reason is to do with the influence of Gaelic sports. The national sports of Ireland are Gaelic Football and Hurling. Almost all young children both boys and girls play the "GAA". Gaelic Football is like a cross between football and rugby, very physical and it certainly toughens players up. Hurling is played on the same field, but the idea is to hit a baseball size ball, into or over a goal with a flat wooden stick. Training for these sports is hard with lots of running. Because young players are encouraged to play a variety of sports, certain aspects of Gaelic sports naturally cross over into soccer.

Another interesting observation is that although on average Irish players train only twice a week, compared to Finnish players training four times, Irish youth national teams have had more success than Finnish.

In Finnish society people start work earlier in the morning and finish earlier. A typical work day in Ireland would be 9 to 5 or 6. One obvious difference I've found regarding work practice is Irish timekeeping, or lack of it. In Finland if you say that training starts at 6, players arrive early and are ready to train at 6. In Ireland 6 means 6.15, I should admit that the working day and travelling are more hectic here, but even so Finns would never accept such practices.

Finns are more diligent, if they have something to do they usually do it straight away. In Ireland, again maybe because the pace of life is faster, things get left, there is more of a "that can wait" attitude.

Finland is ahead of Ireland in terms of social structure, this includes the internet use for services, health care and schools. I feel there is a more competitive atmosphere in Irish work life, and Irish people will take on more work, or work longer days to get the job done or earn more money.

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