

Women in sport: insights from gold medallists

Alex Danson Interview

Contributor name:

Alex Danson

Alex Danson:

When I look back at my sporting career, I really realize how lucky I was at a young age to play so many different sports. Before hockey became probably my priority about age 17, I did everything from surfing, to squash, climbing, cycling. But I think the reason I became more successful at this was definitely my parents, my coaches, the club environment I came from, and also my school. And I think along with that a real desire to learn and an ability to be able to push myself from quite a young age.

If I could go into a transfer program to change sports, I think I'd choose heptathlon. And I'd probably be terrible at heptathlon, but for me it is the ultimate challenge of power, endurance, and I think the mental capacity an athlete has to have to compete over two days in seven events is simply phenomenal. The fact that people can now swap or do dual sports, like Kadeena Cox at the Rio Paralympic Games who won a gold medal on the track and also won a gold medal in athletics is just testament to both the quality of coaching and how these influences on an athlete's journey.

But when learning is involved, it's so important that you're able to both take on feedback and not get disheartened throughout that learning process. I really hope you enjoy your first week, and you'll hear more from me again throughout the course.