

Meet Oliver

A top athlete & teacher too!

Oliver Pritchard left Mary Hare School in 2015 after attending for nine years. He studied BETC Business studies, BETC Science, Design Technology, Statistics and Maths in 6th Form and went onto University studying Agriculture. A member of the GB Team, he has participated in the European Triathlon (U25) in the Netherlands 'Weerts'. Since leaving Mary Hare, Oliver has been up to quite a lot!



“ I can proudly say that I had the chance to represent GB in both deaf and all body competition.



Way back in the day when you were a 6th Former at Mary Hare, what did you want to do as a career?

To be honest, I had no idea what I wanted to do in the future after Mary Hare. But, I did know that I wanted to do something that involved the 'outdoors'. I also struggled to choose whether I wanted to go to university, into an apprenticeship, a job or a gap year.

I somehow came up with an idea that I would travel the world a little and see if I could find anything interesting. That way, I thought I could see if any university did a course in whatever had interested me. That's how I found the enjoyment of Agriculture and The Royal Agricultural University.

What was it like as a deaf student studying at The Royal Agricultural University (RAU)?

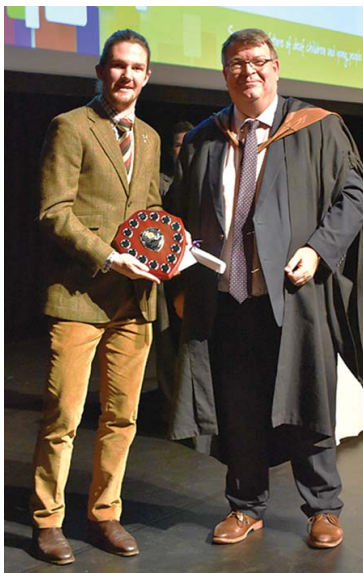
It was a shock for both me and the University. I was the first deaf student that the RAU had had. Most of the rooms were not deaf friendly and some of my lectures were outside and mother nature wasn't nice all the time. I always had problems

with the wind. Over time I slowly found the confidence to sit in the front, recording lectures and asking the lecturer to wear a microphone which connected to my cochlear. By the end of my university life, I was not afraid or shy of the equipment that I had, and I was always learning something. I could easily type on my laptop without needing to lip-read the lecturer.

Tell us a bit about your gap year and what did you gain from it?

It made me feel like everyone should experience a gap year once in their life as you learn so many new skills. It teaches valuable lessons and opens future opportunities and experiences. There are so many different routes you can take during your gap year; volunteering, backpacking, a seasonal job, and they all branch into their own paths. I found my love of agriculture from my gap year and having the chance to experience agriculture in different cultures too.

I went to Australia and South Africa. I wanted to do another gap year after university but sadly COVID got in the way.





You are a successful athlete. Can you tell us a bit more about your achievements?

I am very fortunate to be a successful athlete too! I have heavily invested into my running and triathlon and I've achieved some achievements along my sporting journey. I have travelled around England and Europe to do some races with friends and I can proudly say that I had the chance to represent GB in both deaf and all body competition. I've seriously dedicated my training over lockdown, and I cannot wait to see the results I will get in my 2021 season. I hope to do some races over the summer 'fingers crossed'.

What would taking part in the Deaf Olympics mean to you?

If I could take part in the Deaf Olympics 'Deaflympics', I would want to ensure that I'm in the best shape, I possibly can be! At the same it's a huge honour to have the chance to represent GB at the highest deaf level possible and because of that, I do not want to let myself nor my country down. Knowing some of the deaf triathletes out there, I know it's going to be a competitive field. But that being said, I am going to be there and I'm going to be deadly!



“ everything that Mary Hare has done has built me up to become who I am.

You have now changed your career path and gone into teaching. How did that come about?

I was coming back from a ski season in France and my running partner is a teacher at an international language school and he asked if I could help there as an Activity Leader. Without hesitation, I took the job and I had a blast of a time, interacting with children, learning their culture, showing them around England. Sadly, COVID came and I couldn't work there anymore. I looked around to see if any school would need a young sport/outdoor teacher. I found a school and I've been working there ever since and I'm enjoying myself!

What do you like most about your job as a teacher?

Sadly, with COVID, the teaching at this school has been slightly tricky and different but during my time here it's definitely been being able to help out youngsters and give them the best education that I can provide. I had a blast of a time at the international school, each week was different as a new group arrived to study English and my job was to make their stay fun. But, it was always interesting as well as fun as I would create events for them to do such as scavenging hunts, history trips to

London, football etc. Everyone had a different story, culture, language, hobby and I was eager to learn!

What else would you like to achieve in your career and with your sports?

I'm always up for learning new skills and I'm sure there are loads of opportunities to learn when they pop up. But there are a few achievements that I would like to have under my belt. At the same time, it's always nice to have aims and objectives as that's what is mainly the driving force for me. I would like to achieve a pro-ticket in triathlon and that means I have to achieve a time to qualify and to achieve the time, I have to put my training and dedication to that goal.

If you could go back in time to Mary Hare what would you do differently?

That's a very hard question because everything that Mary Hare has done has built me up to become who I am. There are always 'what if' questions like, if I joined a club in Newbury, would that change who I am today? Personally, with the path I've taken, I wouldn't change a thing.



Arlington Manor,
Snelmore Common,
Newbury, Berkshire RG14 3BQ

Tel: 01635 244200
Fax: 01635 248019

email: enquiries@maryhare.org.uk
web: www.maryhare.org.uk