

News in brief

Staccato reports from the cultural typeface

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STOP PRESS: The Yorkshire-based Sports Marketing Network have soft-launched their new workshop "Communication for Coaches" to agencies that employ or deploy both professional and volunteer sports coaches. The workshop will help coaches develop the soft skills that sometimes are overlooked on qualification courses but are vital. SMN's Svend Elkjaer told us: "The ability to improve technical skills is an important part of coaching but in order to do this, you must be able to engage effectively and communicate with the people you coach. Otherwise, learning does not take place. To coach well you need to be able to communicate well." Svend can be contacted on 01423 326660.

TOP OF THE WORLD: The second World Parks Day will take place on Saturday 19th September to celebrate parks and open spaces. Organised by Parks for Life, an international initiative created by the International Parks and Green Space Alliance, World Parks Day aims to communicate the critical importance of parks in a global context, promote best practice by parks services and encourage people to enjoy their local park and appreciate the importance of green space.

MAKING THE MOST OF MYRA'S MEMORY: The National Gallery in London will be holding its fourth annual Dame Myra Hess day on 6 October with a series of events that will include lunchtime and evening concerts with performances from actress Patricia Routledge and pianist Piers Lane. For those of us unfamiliar with Dame Myra's achievements, the National Gallery has provided the back story: "The National Gallery remained a vital part of London life despite being hit nine times by enemy bombs during the Blitz. Although the Old Master paintings were not on show – temporarily relocated to a secret location in Wales – Londoners were drawn to the Hess concerts. Dame Myra organised daily concerts at the Gallery for six and a half years, from 10 October 1939 until 10 April 1946. By the time the final performance came to a close, 1,698 concerts had been attended by a total of 824,152 people and more than £16,000 had been given to the Musicians Benevolent Fund." The focus of this year's event will once again be on young musicians.

BISL "forward-looking"

BISL will be holding their annual conference at Lord's cricket ground on 12 November with the theme Sport and Leisure – The Decade Ahead. We are told "this title gives an indication of the forward-looking nature of the programme." BISL, which stands for Business in Sport and Leisure, will be looking forward to the next general election and have pinned their colours to the mast by booking Sky TV's political editor, Adam Boulton, to "interview a senior shadow minister from the Conservative Party".

Marking the PE card in Wales

The Sports Council for Wales is recognising schools who put PE at the top of the agenda by awarding 42 of them ActiveMarc Cymru, a benchmarking tool that recognises a commitment to "high quality physical education and school sport". Chair of the SCW, Philip Carling, said, "School sport should not be underestimated – it plays a pivotal role in achieving a healthier Wales."

Hub of excellence for judoka

The British Judo Association has officially opened its new centralised training centre in Dartford in Kent. The full-time centre of excellence will bring together under one roof for the first time Britain's elite judoka under the direction of GB head coach, Patrick Roux, a French chap. Margaret Hicks, the sport's



Communication for Coaches: now available

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performance director, said, "We want this to become a hub of excellence and innovation, not only for our players but for developing performance coaches and practitioners."

Sporta launch new directory

Sporta, the trade association representing cultural and leisure trusts in the UK, has published a directory detailing all the services provided by the 110 organisations within its membership. The directory is presented in spreadsheet format; the first provides a breakdown of all facilities and services offered by each member while the second provides details of the 879 facilities managed by Sporta members. Launching the document, Sporta chair, Craig McAteer, said, "The directory demonstrates the comprehensive range of services and facilities that sporta members now manage within the UK and will prove a valuable source of prospective clients for suppliers within the industry." Copies of the directory are available from Leisure-Net Solutions at a cost of £450.

Searching in Scotland

And in Scotland, Judo Scotland and the SportScotland institute of sport have launched their search for talent through the Gold4Glasgow initiative following a successful cycling event, which took place in May and identified twelve female cyclists with the potential of competing in the Commonwealth Games in 2014. Judo are on the hunt for males and females across the all weight categories, with a particular focus on lightweight females. The first selection event will take place at Ratho, Edinburgh on 27 September.

Never knowingly under-coached

Sportscoach UK and the John Lewis Partnership have unveiled a four-year sports coaching programme to train up to 1,000 employees at John Lewis and Waitrose as coaches. Called the Partner Coaching Programme, the scheme will enable employees (known as partners because collectively they own the business) to engage in sports coaching through identified governing bodies of sport. It will also provide the opportunity for generic coach education for partners who would like to go down the road of coaching children or who want to better understand how to support their child's involvement in sport.

F1 in not-for-profit shock

McLaren Applied Technologies, the Formula One people, are going to be working closely with the UK high performance system in a not-for-profit partnership to provide "instrumentation, telemetry, modelling, simulation and other technical advice to sports such as cycling, canoeing, rowing and sailing".

Boosting business with SkillsActive

The SkillsActive Group will be hosting a seminar for employers titled Boost Your Business Performance at the Leisure Industry Week exhibition on the afternoon of Wednesday 23 September. Proceedings will be led by the National Skills Academy for Sport and Active Leisure and attendance is free of charge.

Give me more, says Boris

Boris Johnson has announced plans to supplement the 70,000 official Olympic volunteers with a further 12,000 city volunteers. This new battalion of Games-time workers will, according to the mayor of London, ensure that all visitors receive a warm welcome and the best advice on how to make the most of the capital during their stay. The idea is to have fully trained volunteers on duty at transport hubs, visitor attractions and the more obvious locations of need. Full details will be released next year, says Captain Boris.

Marathon experts on board for 2012

LOCOG has appointed the London Marathon to manage the Olympic and Paralympic marathons in London. The London Marathon has agreed to provide personnel, equipment and facilities required in the staging of a major marathon event at no cost to LOCOG and Debbie Jevons, LOCOG's director of sport, has welcomed the London Marathon as an invaluable addition to the organisational team. Announcing the arrangements, LOCOG noted that the London Marathon originally helped design the route included within London's candidate file. This provisional route takes athletes through central London past many of the capital's most famous landmarks. However, LOCOG has confirmed that the exact route will be subject to "detailed feasibility work" to look at a range of factors including transport and crowd management. Many observers have noted the trend for marathon courses taking runners several times around a fixed circuit, seen recently at the world athletics championships in Berlin, and it seems that London could be looking at something similar.

NSA for the Outdoors

The National Skills Academy for the Outdoors is to be launched on September

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15 at an event in Penrith, Cumbria. The launch follows the success of the National Skills Academy for Sport and Active Leisure's outdoor pilot in the North West and the region will now serve as the central contact point for national outdoor employers and organisations. Lucy Harrison, the North West's business development manager for the outdoors, commented: "The Skills Academy has been launched to help meet employers' needs and help fill their specific skills gaps with our accredited training providers. By providing a one-stop-shop to access the best training in the outdoors matched with available funding streams, we aim to make an employer's training budget go further."

Think it's safe to go back into the water? Think again.

ISRM are telling us that their conference early bird offer closed at the end August and that the details of the social programme are fixed: "Octopussy – a James Bond themed dinner will offer delegates and exhibitors a relaxed networking opportunity on the Wednesday evening, including pre-dinner drinks at Alton Towers' unique attraction – Sharkbait Reef."

All good friends together

The bid for a chartered institute for sport has been lodged by ISRM and their good friends ISPAL with the Privy Council. The weighty submission contains details of how the two associations have worked together in the past and outlines the aims of the new organisation. First on this list is: "To lead, develop and promote excellence and expertise in the management and development of sport." So strong is the partnership between Loughborough and Reading that the release ends with thanks to "Jill Franks, Alex Scott Bayfield, David Morby, Andy Varnom, Ralph Riley and the three ISPAL Trustees who make up the Project Working Group". Their caps.

Other news just too precious to ignore

Focus Training has been awarded the status of national and regional academy provider for health and fitness by the National Skills Academy for Sport and Active Leisure. PMP Consultancy Ltd, the erstwhile home of ISPAL chair Peter Mann, has merged with Genesis Consulting Ltd to form what they insist on calling 'pmpgenesis'. Carshalton College in London has struck a thirty-year partnership deal with Pulse to create a £4.3 million leisure facility on the site; Pulse will invest £2.7 million in the scheme and will deliver total design, build and operation services. SHOKK is to be part of the renovation of the Shavington Leisure Centre, Crewe in a deal funded by Cheshire East Council and Central and Eastern Cheshire PCT.

London, can you wait?

On the 27 July LOCOG and the ODA celebrated the arrival of the page marked "three years to go" in the official London 2012 diary. The 'three years' theme continued on 29 August when organisers did the same for the opening of the 2012 Paralympic Games. The occasion saw the first official running of the Javelin train link which will take Olympic visitors from St Pancras to the Olympic site in less than seven minutes. Construction work has now begun on all eleven of the residential plots on the Olympic site. Villa Park will not be part of the 2012 football competition; there may be construction work on site at the time. The Royal Mail has been licensed to produce a series of stamps to commemorate the London Games; the first set is scheduled to appear in October but may well be delivered late.

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