

## News in brief

Staccato reports from the cultural typeface

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### Sport England volte-face on disability

Sport England's chief executive has acknowledged that the nation's sports development agency has been failing people with a disability. Launching a new funding stream for disability sports organisations, Jennie Price said, "With only one in 15 disabled adults playing sport regularly – and a decline in that number over the past year – there is a clear need for a change of direction." Under the new approach £3.54 million will be available to the English Federation of Disability Sport and its eight member organisations but not to any other disability sport providers. Price cites canoeing's Paddleability programme which "concentrates on what individual paddlers can do, rather than what they can't" and encourages integration of disabled and non-disabled participants as a model of good practice.

### Funding boost for rural sport

A small social enterprise based in rural Derbyshire, the Community Sports Trust, has secured an investment of £600,000 from the £10 million Rural Communities Fund, which was launched after Sport England research revealed that two thirds of the local authorities with the lowest sports participation rates are in rural areas. The Derbyshire Village Games project will support rural communities to develop new activities, events and competitions that will continue "long beyond the three years of funding". Hayley Lever, director of the Community Sports Trust, said, "This funding will help us bring Derbyshire together and get more people playing sport in our rural communities. The sports on offer will be a lot of fun but there will also be a competitive edge to some – and there will be something for everyone."

### Teamship in NW3

The Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust is promoting a one-day seminar titled Me, My Team and I which promises to investigate "group dynamics at play in the world of sport and in the workplace". Aimed at "anyone who talks and thinks about sport in the workplace (and those who have to listen!)" the event, scheduled for 11 June, boasts speakers Mike Brearley on leadership and BBC journalist Rob Nothman on "the team ethic – and why it can become a good walk spoiled". If the event is half as good as the flyer – which includes the workshop descriptor "Thierry Henry may be the king, but the new prince has arrived" Henry and Reyes: envy, rivalry, inductions, inclusion and exclusion of new staff in the workplace" – the day will be well worth the £150 being asked.

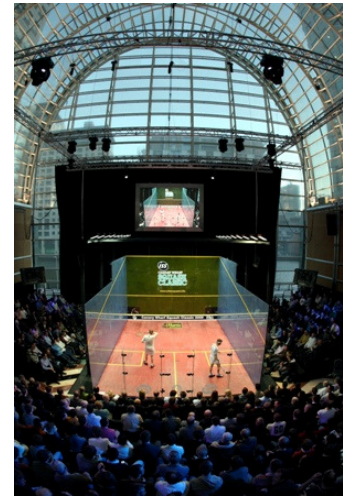
### Take your partners for National Schools Sports Week

National Schools Sports Week is being launched around the country with some unlikely conjunctions coming to light, notably in Scotland where Archie Kane, group executive director for Scotland with Lloyds Banking Group, chose to use uber-Englishman Darren Campbell for his launch. Kane said, "Bank of Scotland National School Sport Week is at the very heart of our partnership with the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games here in Scotland." This in a country where Anyone But England World Cup-wear is on sale and the annus sporticus on everyone's lips is 2014; emphatically not 2012.

### Light in the planning gloom

The Department of Communities and Local Government is currently

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**NICOL-PLATED SQUASH SUCCESS:** Organisers of the ISS Canary Wharf Classic squash event were rewarded with full houses and a home winner with Yorkshireman Nick Matthew beating TLR favourite Gregory Gaultier in the final. The event, held at the iconic East Wintergardens on the Thames consistently draws big audiences and the sell out was described by former World number one Peter Nicol as "a sign of the quality of squash on show, the fantastic atmosphere in the magnificent venue and the culmination of seven years' hard work by the organising team."

*Picture courtesy of Squashpics.com*

consulting on proposed planning policy on: biodiversity; geological conservation; landscape and soil protection; heritage coastline; open space; sport; recreation; green infrastructure; and floodlighting of sports and recreational facilities. The proposals are part of a streamlining process which seeks to consolidate four existing guidance notes and the CCPR tells us that this is a good thing for sport and recreation as it will encourage local authorities to consider floodlighting for the benefits of health and well-being and the extended use of facilities.

### **A global perspective on sport in Barnsley**

Northern College, Barnsley is to host a one-day conference for football club managers, heads of PE, and leaders of community and voluntary youth sports associations to consider sport and globalization with a focus on the World Cup in South Africa. Speakers at the event, to be held on 22 April, include: Sarah Williams, the Rugby Football League's equality and diversity manager; Yvonne Cass, who chairs the Northern Refugee Centre; and Alan Irwin from the Education Sports Forum. The free event includes a buffet lunch, while childcare and transport can be available if booked in advance.

### **Optimising voltage**

Leisure complex managers looking to cut electricity bills should be able to reduce floodlight power bills by up to 17% at the flick of a switch according to Carbon Trust-backed Marshall Tufflex Energy Management. The British-based company, which dates back to 1942, has installed its Voltis voltage optimisation system "to great effect" at Horntye Park Sports Complex in Hastings, West Sussex as well as at the Flambards Experience theme park in Cornwall. Details of the "hi-tech, 'smart' voltage optimisation product that typically can deliver twice the savings of standard 'step-down' systems" can be found at [www.marshalltufflexenergy.com](http://www.marshalltufflexenergy.com)

### **Can someone answer that phone? Perhaps not**

Leisure-net Solutions has unveiled the conclusions drawn from an investigation into the quality of customer service response among spas. Leisure-net managing director, Mike Hill, explained what the 'call-Focus research' discovered: "The survey found that, while people answering the phone have both knowledge and enthusiasm, they aren't necessarily focused on actually making a booking. However, in terms of subjective evaluation – ie not what they said but how it was said – they scored higher. The overall score for things like professionalism, friendliness and efficiency was a very respectable 85%." Leisure-net also sent email enquiries to 40 spa operators and received a much poorer response. Many operators did not respond at all, while those that did omitted vital information and lacked a clear 'call to action'. The overall score for email responses was just 40%.

### **A smile and a Wave**

Still on customer care, Sussex-based leisure trust, Wave Leisure, has proudly announced that it has begun its preparation for the summer season with the completion of two of Tourism South East's acclaimed Welcome Host Plus courses for staff in the trust's six leisure centres. The courses focus on challenging situations, building a winning team and how to aim for truly world-class customer service. Tourism South East chief executive, Mike Bedingfield, who was on hand for the presentational duties, urged companies in the tourism sector to follow Wave's lead. "There are both exciting and challenging times ahead for our region's tourism industry," he said. "With 2012 fast approaching, we must prepare our tourism businesses to welcome the world in a challenging economic climate."

### **Grass-roots focus for FA awards**

The Football Association is inviting nominations for a new football awards programme that it hopes will serve to recognise grass-roots clubs and volunteers across the country.

The eight categories include: the outstanding contribution to community football award; the community club award; the development club award; the charter standard club award; the charter standard league award; volunteer of the year award; young volunteer of the year award; and coach of the year award. The eight national award winners will be announced at the FA community awards event, which is this being held at Wembley on the day of the FA Community Shield in August.



**TEE IT UP:** With the Ryder Cup en route to Wales the Golf Union of Wales' director of golf development, Hannah Fitzpatrick, has launched golf awareness week under the slogan 'Pick it up for the Ryder Cup'. According to Hannah, the promotion is "aimed at encouraging people to take up the game, while also encouraging nomadic and former club members to join their local golf clubs". Cradoc Golf Club in mid Wales is quoted as offering "28 free tee times between 2-4pm during the week" as its contribution.

### **First City land big one**

It's always nice to be able to report success for a friend and the news that First City Events, the company that brings the world the Scottish Sports Development Conference, has won the tender to event manage the 3rd Commonwealth Sports Development Conference is one such opportunity. Joyce Lamond, a director of First City and a member of TLR's First 500, was naturally pleased: "The event, which will take place in Glasgow on 3rd and 4th June has an international line up of speakers but is highly relevant to anyone working in sports development or sport for development." Details of the programme are available at [www.regonline.co.uk/builder](http://www.regonline.co.uk/builder)

### **Continuum handling 2012 bursaries**

And in the manner of London busses, we note the success of a second First 500 subscriber, Grace Clancey of Continuum Sport and Leisure, whose company are administering Official Sports London which is "an exciting bursary programme that helps Londoners, aged 16-plus, to gain sports officiating qualifications in one of 21 sports. Successful applicants can train as referees, judges, timekeepers, scorers, umpires, line judges and many other roles". With bursaries available of up to £350, we suggest you go to [www.officialsports.org](http://www.officialsports.org) to get full details.

### **More news: the soul of wit**

PulseFitness has launched a website for its dance machines. Tees Valley Leisure is providing computer skills training at its Eston Sports Academy. A £1.5 million refurbishment project is underway to redevelop Folkestone Sports Centre. External works have been completed on the £12.7 million leisure centre in Darwen, Lancashire. Lifetime will launch a new interactive instructor programme in May. The London Borough of Hillingdon has opened a brand new £31 million leisure centre, which boasts the first 50 metre pool to be built in London for 40 years; the new complex was built around a 1930s outdoor pool, historically known as the Uxbridge Lido, which has now been fully-restored. Plans for Bristol City FC's new £60 million stadium will not be called in by the government. CIWEM's annual conference, which has a track record of including arts and culture as part of its discussion of the environment, will be held 28-29 April at the Olympia Conference Centre, London. Lifetime, which employs over 180 staff, has become the only company in the health and fitness sector to be awarded Best Companies accreditation.

### **2012: coming soon to a calendar near you**

The Olympic Stadium's lighting towers have all been lifted into place 60 metres above the field of play, taking the flagship venue to its full height. Planning permission has been given for the construction of a new Polyclinic in the London 2012 Athletes' Village. Greenwich Council's Planning Committee has approved the temporary use of land at Greenwich Park, the National Maritime Museum, the Old Royal Naval College and Blackheath Circus Field for the London 2012 equestrian and modern pentathlon events. Next has been appointed the official clothing and homeware supplier for the London Olympics. A key footbridge in the centre of the Olympic Park has been lifted into place. Panasonic has become the presenting partner of a London 2012 Cultural Olympiad short film competition for young people, Film Nation:Shorts. Forty two members of the guarding team at the London 2012 Olympic Park construction site have graduated from a recent training course to obtain a professional security qualifications; half of the guards are local residents. The Olympic Park Enabling Works programme, the engineering project that laid the foundations for the long-term regeneration of the Olympic Park site, has been awarded the "Greatest Contribution to London" award at this year's ICE London Civil Engineering Awards.

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