

## News in brief

Staccato reports from the cultural typeface

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### Long-term benefits of baby swimming to be researched

Water Babies, the market leader in baby swimming, is to team up with the University of Manchester to research the physical and psychological impact of structured, taught baby swimming classes on parents, babies and the family unit as a whole. The first research project of its kind, the study will examine how effective baby swimming classes are as a form of post-natal, physical activity for new mothers, and how this can help with their fitness and weight loss, as well as the impact that this has on their child. The research will also explore the link between physical activity and post-natal depression and whether exercise can help to combat this condition. Water Babies managing director Steve Franks told *The Leisure Review*, "We want to look a little deeper into the psychology and science behind baby swimming classes and feel this project will significantly support the government's health agenda for getting people more active, while generating robust data on the health-related benefits of participating in structured, physical activity from as young an age as possible."

### Big names booked for Insight at Herts Coaching Conference

*The Leisure Review* has been asked by Herts Sports Partnership to provide a Coaching Insight seminar as part of their annual coaching conference on 7 October in Hatfield and have recruited three very different but inspirational and challenging speakers. Dr Richard Bailey, a leading thinker in both education and sports coaching, will deliver a keynote presentation on the nature of learning and will be followed by an expert in the field of gamification, Matt Lent, who will engage delegates in an exploration of what really happens when we play games in practice sessions. Rounding off the morning session will be Leeds Metropolitan University's Sergio Lara-Bercial who will report back on the learning from the Olympic Global Coaches House.

### And our survey says...

Figures published by the Scottish government have revealed that schools across the country are delivering more physical education (PE) lessons than they were in 2004/05. According to the Healthy Living survey, 84 per cent of primary schools now provide at least two hours of PE lessons a week – up from 3 per cent – and 92 per cent of secondary schools are delivering two periods of PE across S1 to S4 level – up from 46 per cent. Sport Scotland chief executive Stewart Harris was quoted as saying: "The figures are encouraging and show that significant progress is being made on meeting the PE targets in Scotland's schools."

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We raise our collective hat to the many professional and volunteer organisers, coaches and officials who have been making Schools Games happen around the country despite the bad weather. Our picture shows young people at the Merseyside School Games enjoying what Baroness Sue Campbell a VIP guest at the Wavertree Sports Park is quoted as calling "a fantastic opportunity to engage a whole range of young people across a wide variety of sports which will motivate and inspire thousands of young people in this special year".

### **Benepe bows out**

New York's parks commissioner Adrian Benepe, a man described as "a real parks professional", is to leave the job he has held for ten years to work on the West Coast in a newly created position focusing on urban park development at the Trust for Public Land, a non-profit group based in San Francisco. Making the announcement at Soundview Park in the Bronx, Mayor Michael Bloomberg said Benepe, a friend of The Leisure Review, had done "extraordinary work as parks commissioner, leading transformative changes in every corner of New York City". Benepe was interviewed by TLR's Jonathan Ives in March 2008. The article can be found at <http://www.theleisurereview.co.uk/articles08/NYCbenepe.html>

### **Outdoors industry on hold**

Government changes to licensing have led to uncertainty in the adventure activity industry over what will replace the current national scheme. With Scotland following Wales in opting to keep the Adventure Activity Licensing Authority, the Health and Safety Executive have announced a "pause" in plans to abolish it in England and drawn the fire of outdoorsy types who see the delay as a recipe for confusion. Guy Jarvis, chair of the Association of British Climbing Walls (ABC), reckons: "This decision has taken us back to square one. ABC regards licensing as a good thing. It offers our users that quality assurance. It's good value for money." While John Cousins, chief executive of Mountain Training UK, said he was "concerned that after an extensive round of consultation and intensive dialogue last year with HSE they appear to have failed to come up with a deliverable outcome and that further discussion could leave the sector just as muddled".

### **Scotland wakes up to wakeboarding**

Scotland's first wakeboarding facility has opened at Foxlake Adventures near Dunbar with over 1,200 people taking to the water in the opening weekend. Established as a not-for-profit venture, Foxlake has the support of the local community and the national governing body, with Alan Murray of Waterskiscotland seeing it "as an extremely exciting development for water sports in Scotland and we have worked to see a cable here for some time as part of our facilities strategy. As a short listed 2020 Olympic sport, we see Foxlake starting something very exciting and Scotland potentially having the opportunity to develop athletes in the discipline at the highest levels."

### **KKP sign off on Loughborough degree**

An innovative MBA for the sports industry has been launched by Loughborough University following a review of the proposition for the course by Bury-based management consultancy Knight, Kavanagh and Page (KKP). KKP's brief was to determine the extent of the market for an International Sports Management MBA and whether Loughborough had the profile to carry it off. Highly selective and targeted at executives from all over the world, the course has been designed to promote career advancement and personal development within the rapidly changing international sports industry. The programme is being offered by Loughborough's highly regarded School of Business and builds on Loughborough's reputation as the UK's No.1 university for sport.

### **Optimistic ASA launch summer programme**

Despite current climatic conditions, aquatics governing body

the ASA have launched Get Safe 4 Summer, a campaign designed to provide young people with the basic knowledge of how to help in an emergency as well as how to keep out of danger near water while still enjoying themselves. Aimed at children and their parents, the campaign will promote and raise awareness of the importance of learning to swim and achieving water confidence; increase knowledge and practical water safety skills; raise awareness that organised, supervised water-based activity is fun and safe; introduce new water-based skills such as snorkelling; and promote swimming as part of a healthy lifestyle and family activity. The ASA are inviting leisure centres and schools to hold their own Get Safe 4 Summer event and to support them with this the Loughborough-based body has made available the requisite resources online, although there "are no funds available to support these events".

### **Bouncy castles as art?**

Sacrilege, the life-sized inflatable replica of Stonehenge by Turner Prize-winning artist Jeremy Deller, has set off on tour to 25 locations across the UK. A co-commission between Glasgow International Festival of Visual Art and the Mayor of London, the work was enormously popular when, supported by Creative Scotland, it appeared in Glasgow earlier this year and now with support from Arts Council England it will travel around the country as part of London 2012 Festival. Jeremy Deller said: "A lot of my work deals with history, and Sacrilege is no exception. This is a way to get reacquainted with ancient Britain with your shoes off."

### **Groups fitness brand launches**

American fitness brand Body Training Solutions (BTS) has launched in the UK, bringing its successful group fitness experience to the sector in partnership with Integrity Fitness who will distribute the programme. Fergus Ahern, managing director of Integrity Fitness, said: "It's a proven fact that serving members in groups drastically improves retention and referrals. Not only that, group fitness classes enable operators to maximise space and service members more cost effectively, ultimately making their facilities more profitable."

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