

Sport

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Gymnast is in the Hunt for Commonwealth glory

Gymnastics

HORSHAM gymnastics club starlet Jocelyn Hunt will be part of the English team heading to India next month for the Commonwealth Games.

Jocelyn, 15, a member at the successful Pavilions in the Park-based club cemented her place in the GB side alongside World Champion Beth Tweddle when she helped the squad claim silver in the European Championships. And now she is busy training at the National performance centre in Lilleshall with her England teammates ahead of the Games which start on October 3 in New Delhi.

It is a major feather in the cap of Horsham Gymnastics Centre, which is starting to produce world class athletes.

In the past year, Jocelyn has travelled to Italy, South Africa and Canada to represent her country, but her most outstanding achievement to date was winning the historic silver medal as part of the GB team at the Europeans Championships.

Coach Maxine Pucknell said: "It is a huge achievement. Since we moved into this facility (Pavilions) six years ago we have begun to build a reputation as a strong club. We are proud that we have been able to see one of our gymnasts in a senior national squad at a major championships within those first six years."

Gymnasts attend the centre from all over the South East and Horsham have seen representatives in national squads

'We are proud that we have been able to see one of our gymnasts in a senior squad at a major championships inside our first six years'

at several age groups, while Jocelyn, from Hampshire is the first at senior level.

Maxine added: "There are only five gymnasts on a team and in this country gymnastics is currently very strong and at a very high standard."

"Jocelyn's team at the Europeans finished above the Romanians.

"It's tough to even make a squad, let alone get picked for the team for a major event."

Horsham also have Francesca Vincent, Amy Middleton and Lydia Burgess rising through the ranks, while Jocelyn's Horsham coach Sadie Makinson will join the team in India as coach to the England team.

"We feel really proud that we have played a part in what Jocelyn has achieved," Maxine added.

Other members of the squad plan to spend a week in Delhi during the games, and Maxine is paying little attention to fears over the athletes' accommodation. She said: "I'm sure everything is being done to get

everything ready in time." Jocelyn is spending much of her time this month training full time at Lilleshall with rest of the national squad.

In a typical week she fits 23 hours of training at Horsham in between school and travelling to and from home.

Dad John said: "She has entered the team very young and is still catching the others up."

"There is a lot of pride in watching what she has done and her achievements. The silver medal at the European Championships proved she can compete at the highest level."

"Jocelyn's school has been very good and has sent her homework."

"And it's proof that you can get your rewards. If you stick at it, they are out there."

"She is looking forward to the Games, but it comes down to when you actually get there, but Jocelyn is taking it in her stride."

And Jocelyn's chances of representing Great Britain at the 2012 London Olympics have only been enhanced by her success this year. Gymnastics chiefs pinpointed her as a potential London games star two years ago and the elevation to the senior squad is just the latest phase of her development.

John added: "The idea is that we are working towards 2012."

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Horsham wait on Andrews

Football

HORSHAM are still sweating on the future of Ben Andrews after the club captain asked for more time to consider a move to Burgess Hill.

Andrews met with manager John Maggs and members of the Hornets board to thrash out his future, following the approach from the Hillians, of Ryman 1 South.

But Andrews is taking more time to consider his options, and a conclusion could be reached today (Thursday).

Maggs said: "It is going quite well, but Ben has not agreed to anything as yet."

"I think he needs to go back to Burgess Hill and have a chat with them, Ben has a package on offer from them which he needs to consider."

"We played our card last night (Tuesday) and he wants 24 hours to go back to Burgess Hill."

Meanwhile, Horsham are looking to add further reinforcements to the new faces which arrived in time for Saturday's 0-0 draw with Folkestone. Ryan Woodford (Worthing) and Rishi Nankani (Carshalton) went straight into the first team, while the Hornets are hopeful of tying up a deal for Hastings midfielder Anthony Storey.

The former Middlesbrough man is currently mulling over Horsham's offer, and featured in the Hastings squad in their loss to Concord Rangers on Tuesday.

"He is very keen on coming here," Maggs remarked. "He is a very talented midfielder and I know a lot of clubs are very keen to sign him."

Those omitted from the Folkestone game 'trained well' on Tuesday, but Maggs added: "There will be changes, there has to be with these comings and goings."

Belief key for YM's revival

Football

DEAN POTTER believes he can pinpoint the moment when Horsham YMCA finally kick started their season.

YM recorded their first points of the campaign thanks to two wins in two days, against Whyteleafe and Fleet Town. And after a wretched pre-season and seven game losing streak they are up and running.

Colin Jenkinson's men were trailing 3-1 at the break in last week's Championship Manager Cup tie against Fleet, and that's where the tide turned.

First team assistant manager Potter said: "We told them to treat the rest of the game like a pre-season match and just go out and play."

"Although we lost 4-3, we scored three goals in the second half and you could see the confidence growing among them."

"We still have work to do and it's not job done but we believe we have a squad here capable of competing in this league."

A host of news faces has also helped jump start YM, goalkeeper Mark Fox is joined by the returning Glen Woodburn, on-loan Tooting man Craig Vernon, striker Joey Collewijn, Ashley Henry Brown and ex-Carshalton player Steve Newman.

"Now we see the players, like Woody (Woodburn) buying into what we want to do at this club, it's a good feeling," Potter added.

Thornely is let go by Sussex

Cricket

HORSHAM'S talented batsman Michael Thornely is on the lookout for a new county after being released by Sussex this week.

Thornely, 22, signed a professional contract with the Hove club in 2007, scored a first class best of 89 only earlier this month against Northants. But he was one of three players Sussex let go, Eastbourne's Ragheb Aga and South African Chad Keegan are the other two.

The Horsham man progressed through the youth and academy ranks at Hove before making his first-class debut for Sussex in 2007.

Professional Cricket Manager Mark Robinson said, "I would like to thank Ragheb, Chad and Michael on all they have given us during their time at Sussex."

"All 100 players have always given 100 per cent and have been fine ambassadors for the club, and we would like to wish them all the best for the future."

Flash Gordon hits double to inspire YM victory

Ryman League

Division 1 South
Horsham YMCA 2 Gordon 68, 87
Fleet Tn 0

GAVIN GORDON finished off a superb 48 hours for Horsham YMCA with a second half double to see off Fleet Town on Tuesday night.

Coming on the back of Sunday's 2-1 win against Whyteleafe, YM grew in confidence throughout, and aided by a red card for Fleet skipper Lee Riddell, struck twice in the final half hour.

Such is the turnaround this week, YM's points tally has increased sixfold in the space of two days - and dependant on last night's results, could wake this morning to find

themselves above Worthing in the Ryman Division 1 South table.

Assistant manager Dean Potter said: "Whyteleafe was a good starting point."

"I thought we deserved both these wins."

"Tonight they came at us and we weathered the storm for the first 20 minutes, but in the second half I thought we were the ones creating the chances."

Fleet started looking lively, with memories of last week's 4-3 Championship Manager Cup win against YM fresh in the minds. Mark Fox, one of several new recruits at Gorings Mead was forced into an early save from Johnnie Dyer, and Dan Read twice went close.

But as YM grew in stature, so did their threat up front. Joey Collewijn looked to gen-

uinely scare the Fleet defence, and his pace took him away in the 29th minute only to shoot wide under pressure.

Strike partner Gordon flashed a volley just over the bar when the Fleet defence mis-judged a bouncing ball, and YM went into the break in high spirits.

And they went in front shortly after the hour mark.

Collewijn wriggled clear of three defenders inside the Fleet box, and could have gone down about four times before he was finally floored by Riddell who was shown an instant red card.

Gordon stepped up to guide the spot kick home, and YM's tails were now up.

Further chances fell to Collewijn, who hit the post, and Eddie Walker whose curling shot just went wide.

With the extra man, YM were able to exploit the space, and Gordon wrapped it up three minutes from time by converting Peter Barclay's right wing cross.

YM (4-4-2): Fox; Brewer, O'Neill, Vernon, Woodburn; Alosa, Walker, Amponsah, Barclay; Gordon, Collewijn.

Statattack

Horsham YM	Fleet
4.....Shots on goal.....	4
2.....Shots off goal.....	2
0.....Corners	6
2.....Offside	2
7.....Fouls.....	10
1.....Yellow cards.....	1
0.....Red cards	1
	Crowd.....75

Rebecca's delight at her World Cup Final show

Women's rugby

REBECCA Essex has spoken of her joy at representing her country in the Women's Rugby World Cup Final earlier this month.

The former Horsham junior was part of the England team which lost 13-10 to New Zealand in a hard fought final, and hopes England's performances and the buzz around the World Cup held on home soil will prove a major boost for her sport. She said: "To represent your country in a World Cup final is the ultimate sporting honour, and for that to happen in your own country was amazing."

"It was a great honour to be part of the squad. There was such a lot of publicity, and we received great support."

"Running out onto the pitch for the final in front of such a large and supportive crowd was probably the most memorable moment."

Rebecca, now playing for Richmond, played every game as England made light work of their pool matches, comfortably beating Kazakhstan, Ireland and the USA to record maximum points. And in the semi final, England saw off

Australia 15-0 at the Twickenham Stoop.

That led to a pulsating final against the Black Ferns, and despite a spirited fightback, New Zealand were able to hold on to lift the title for the fourth time in front of a crowd of 13,000.

"All the games were hard, but the final was particularly so," Rebecca said. "The New Zealanders were very physical and skilful, and the match was very close"

"Obviously we very disappointed. We had all worked so hard in the preparations and in all the games, and so we were naturally upset to have lost. The fact we only lost by three points also made it doubly disappointing."

England coach Gary Street believes the match and the packed house at The Stoop will have changed the face of women's rugby forever.

Echoing that, Rebecca said: "The publicity surrounding the whole tournament was so positive that hopefully it has started to raise the profile of the sport."

"This may inspire more girls to get involved in the game and ensure women's rugby receives the recognition it deserves."



So close. Becky Essex in World Cup action.



Golden girl. Beth Britton shows off her medals.

Swimmer is a great Britton

Swimming

BETH Britton made the biggest splash for Atlantis SC at the weekend with three gold medals, as the Horsham club recorded a stunning 70 personal best swims.

A 26-strong squad of younger Atlantis swimmers produced the heroics at the annual Ken Deeley Sprint meet at the Prince Regent Swimming Pool in Brighton.

For the swimmers this was their first individual gala of the new season and the first opportunity to pick up qualifying times for the Sussex County Championships next February. And it proved to be an excellent start for the whole squad with 17 county qualifying times (CQT) achieved and 70 PBs.

Beth, 11, gave the outstanding performance of the day, picking up two CQTs, three gold medals and a silver.

In the 100m individual medley (IM) Beth knocked an impressive 4.5 seconds off her previous PB to achieve a time of 1min

19.2secs and in the 50m free she swam a lightning fast 31m 5s. Also showing up strongly were Ben Stevens aged nine, who picked up second places in the 50 free and 100 IM, thirds in the 50 back and 50 fly and two CQTs, and Jess Matlock also nine, who put in another consistent set of performances with four CQTs and four silvers in fly, back, IM and free.

Issy Harrod (9), Eleanor Morris (11), Aimee Davies (11), Gemma Cumber, Tegan Jenkins (12) and Lauren Pedel (9) all enjoyed a successful day, picking up CQTs. Amongst the older Atlantis competitors, Joe Harrod (14) plunged into the new campaign with CQTs in the 50 free and fly.

Elsewhere, Cam Lambourne (Tanbridge), Katy Harris (Collyers) and Issy Dunlop (Farlington) represented Sussex schools in the Divisional round of the English Schools Swimming Association (ESSA) Championships. Cam was fourth in the 100m free, Katy just missed out on a best in finishing second in the 200m IM, while Issy was second in the 100m breast stroke.