

# replay

Bristol's sport, exercise and health magazine for alumni



## Inside Winter 2008

Stay connected



Sports update



Question of sport



World of sport



# Welcome



Welcome to the annual edition of *replay* – the magazine for alumni keeping you up to date with the University of Bristol's Sport, Exercise and Health.

We're proud to update you on sporting successes of current students and alumni alike. We're also delighted to be able to showcase the work we're doing in raising health and exercise aspirations within the University and the wider community.

Sport, exercise and health are key topics in the UK today, and rightly so. Therefore in this edition we particularly focus on how all alumni can stay involved in sport, exercise and health at the University. On pages four and five you'll find profiles of particular individuals who contribute in many different ways. We thank them for their support and look forward to having many more of you involved in the future.

With the University centenary coming up in 2009, we have a range of events for alumni to get involved in. We'll be following up on the huge success of this year's Alumni Sporting Weekend in which over 250 alumni took part in a range of different sporting events against University teams. On the same weekend, the Alumni Sporting Dinner, held in the Wills Memorial Building, saw 150 alumni raise over £8,000 to support Tamara Johnson, a young member of staff, who broke her neck while playing for Bath Rugby Club.

We're still endeavouring to excel in sport, but health-related issues and developing ideas for a healthy University for both staff and students have also been high on the agenda this year. These have ranged from a staff pedometer challenge to free seminars on how to stay healthy during exams. We're constantly adapting to meet the needs of the world we live in, and we hope you enjoy reading about how we are doing this.

I hope you enjoy reading *replay*. Please contact us with your sport, exercise and health news, as we always love to hear from our alumni.

Bob Reeves

Director, Sport, Exercise and Health

## Events

Come along and support your university at a whole range of varsity events against the University of the West of England in 2009.

- American football  
7 February
- Football  
30 April
- Canoe polo  
3 May
- Netball  
4 May
- Rugby  
5 May
- Basketball  
6 May
- Boat race  
16 May

Please note these dates are subject to change. To keep up to date, visit the Athletics Union (AU) website [www.bristolau.co.uk](http://www.bristolau.co.uk).

# Sports update

## Big splash in waterpolo

Both the University's women's and men's waterpolo teams were winners in their sport at the inaugural British Universities Championships in Sheffield in March. The men's team won the Championship Finals and the women were victorious in the Women's Trophy Final.



## Bristol Festival of Sport

1,200 students from 16 local secondary schools took part in the Bristol Festival of School Sport hosted by the University at Coombe Dingle. The event, which was held in March, targeted young people who do not usually represent their school in sport. They competed in 12 different sports including extreme golf, ultimate frisbee and rowing.

## Engineer sails to victory

Hannah Mills (Mechanical Engineering 2006- ) and her partner, Katrina Hughes, have won the 2008 Women's Junior World Championship in sailing (470 class). Hannah is a member of the University's High Performance Squad, which aims to help talented student athletes continue with their sporting careers without compromising their academic progress.

Bob Reeves, Director of Sport, said: 'This confirms the University's reputation as a centre of excellence for sailing. Iain Percy (BSc 1998), a former student who won two gold medals in Beijing this year, may find his record challenged in the 2012 Games.'

## Making a point

Two students enjoyed great success at the annual 5 Nations Fencing Tournament. At this team event, between England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, Francesco Egro (Medicine 2004- ) won both foil and sabre events and Naomi Taylor (Dentistry 2005- ) won the épée event. Both are members of the University's High Performance Squad.

## The long road to London 2012

It has been an outstanding year for Bristol's endurance runners. They were invited to compete in the UK Olympic trials in summer 2008. Claire Hallissey (PhD Pathology and Microbiology 2006- ) won gold in the British Universities 10,000 metres, Tom Russell (Mathematics and Philosophy 2005- ) recorded an exceptional time of 14 minutes 1 second at the British Olympic Trials in a race won in 13 minutes 54 seconds and Philippa Aukett (BSc 2007) won bronze in the British Universities Championships in the 800 metres.

## Student goes from strength to strength

Power lifter Josh Hill (Medicine 2005- ) broke the British record (under 100kg category) in July at the British Junior Power Lifting Championships (Under 23). He lifted an impressive 835kg and is now the British Junior Champion. This success looks set to propel him to represent Great Britain in Florida later this year. Josh's breakdown for each category was: squat 320kg, bench press 220kg, dead lift 295kg. Josh is a member of the University's High Performance Squad.



“  
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Sport is vital for a healthy university. The University's Centenary Campaign, which will be launched in January 2009, aims to raise money for a variety of areas of Bristol sport, exercise and health, including providing professional coaching, awarding scholarships to students with exceptional sporting ability, and engaging the community in sporting activity. Find out more at [www.bristol.ac.uk/centenarycampaign](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/centenarycampaign).

## Lifelong sport

**Many people stay involved with University sport long after they've graduated. Emma Henry (BA 2007) reports.**

Many of us will have been involved in sport in one way or another during our time at Bristol. I made occasional trips to the gym (cleverly timed with *Neighbours* so that I could watch it on the TVs and ignore my woeful level of fitness) and rare forays into the land of intramural netball.

When I started talking to alumni about this article, it soon became clear to me that sport is a key way in which many alumni continue to stay involved with their University.

Like Harvey Smythe (see below), many alumni organise reunions for their old sporting teams. And hundreds of alumni return to the

University's annual Alumni Sports Weekend, where alumni teams go head-to-head with student teams.

Other alumni, such as Jiu Jitsu coach Chris Washington (see opposite), prefer to give their time or money to support Bristol sport.

Some continue to use the University's sporting facilities. If, as a third of graduates do, you decide to stay in Bristol, you can join the University gym and swimming pool at a discounted alumni rate. And the results can be inspiring, as Niall McCann (see opposite) proved when he used the University gym to train for an Atlantic Rowing Race.

This all gives me hope that, even if I wasn't that fit at University, it's never too late. I won't be rowing across the Atlantic, but I might just renew my gym membership.

### Alex Lockey (BEng 2007)

Alex Lockey, captain of the Men's Hockey 1st Team in 2006/07, has helped land £4,000 for the University men's and women's hockey clubs.

Alex, who works at jjFOX, a specialist

recruitment company, stepped in to support the hockey clubs when their previous sponsorship deal ended this year. He persuaded jjFOX to back the hockey teams in a one-year deal and believes that it could be the start of a longer-term relationship. Alex

says: 'Hockey is a sport that requires strong characters who are dedicated, motivated, good team players and communicators. These are some of the personal traits that we look for in our trainee recruitment consultants at jjFOX.'



### Harvey Smythe (BSc 1989) Chief Executive of Pizza Express

Harvey sponsors the University's High Performance Squad with an extremely generous £10,000 a year. He also keeps personally involved in alumni sport. He was heavily involved in rugby during his time at Bristol and is still in close contact

with his rugby team. He says: 'Each year we get back together and have a golf tournament called the Dewberry Cup against a Durham alumni team. I still see a lot of the guys, but not so many of my fellow biochemists!'

## Chris Washington (BSc 2004) Jiu Jitsu coach

Chris started Jiu Jitsu in his first year at Bristol. He had never been involved in martial arts before and wanting to try something new. He continued with his training throughout University and also played intramural hockey and five-a-side football.

After leaving Bristol, he went travelling and then returned to

complete the five-year training needed in order to become an instructor. He is now coach to the University Jiu Jitsu club.

Being based in Bristol, he really enjoys his continued association with the club. He is not alone as two of his university contemporaries have continued with the sport as alumni, one being his assistant instructor.

## Niall McCann (BSc 2004)



Zoology graduate Niall McCann made use of the Associate Sports Membership and used the University gym to train for the 2007 Atlantic Rowing Race – known as the toughest rowing challenge in the world. He also had the full support of the University's Health and Fitness Manager James Rowntree and Sports Performance Manager Gordon Trevett to help him in his training.

Niall praises the facilities. 'The gym has a comprehensive free-weights room, a good range of weights machines and a very extensive cardio section; with a large number of ergos, treadmills, exercise bikes and cross-trainers. Alumni get an excellent discount enabling them to train in a friendly, poser-free environment at highly discounted rates.'

## Marc Wedge (MSc 2003) Local businessman

Marc 'The Wedge' is best known as the host of the Wednesday sports social Sportsnight. This club night generates a sports fund from its profits which is available to all AU clubs to obtain items outside of the general budgets.

But Marc has been involved in Bristol sport in many other ways as well. 'I give money, I do the AU

Dinner video and I came first in the Bristol Half Marathon when I drove the four-litre pace car,' he says. 'A cynical person would say I only do it for commercial gain, but those who know me know the blood, sweat and tears that I put into Bristol sport and the hours that I give up to support it. I genuinely believe that sport in Bristol is a valuable part of student life and I do hope it continues.'

## Professor Selby Knox (PhD 1969) Emeritus Professor of Chemistry



Selby has been involved in sport as a student at Bristol and as a member of staff – he captained the Wills Hall football team and played for the staff cricket team.

As the former Chair of the Sports and Recreation Advisory Group, he supported Bob Reeves with the 'promotion of sport and helping to improve the facilities for Bristol'. At the 2008 AU Dinner he was recognised for his contribution to Bristol sport, which he describes as a 'great honour'.

He puts his enthusiasm down to always having 'got great enjoyment out of Bristol sport' and following his recent retirement has 'improved his golf and been fishing in Ireland'. He also sails, skis and plays squash. Selby still has his University gym pass and plans to carry on using it.

## Spotlight on ... trampolining



The University Trampolining Club is still a bouncy infant at just six years old. Despite being relatively new, it has gripped the interest of its 150-strong membership and is reaping national successes.

The club finished third in the BUSA National Championships after hosting the BUSA Regional Championship in February 2008. They also hold their own annual competition open to all universities.

Although many members come from a gymnastic background, the club offers three training sessions a week for novice to elite level and open taster sessions for non-members to have a try. In fact, trampolining has proven so popular that Sport, Exercise and Health have started offering adult beginner courses.

# A question of sport

## Ten questions for Nick Neiland (BSc 1994, PhD 1999), javelin thrower.

### What achievement are you most proud of?

Gold medal for England at the Commonwealth Games in Melbourne 2006.

### What achievement did you have to work hardest for?

The above, because I was working full-time as a research analyst at an investment bank at the same time as training.

### Who has been an inspirational person in your life?

The inspiration for my javelin technique was Steve Backley, who was world record holder when I was developing my technique. I admire Tiger Woods' pursuit of excellence and ability to execute a high level of skill under pressure. Above all, the person who has enabled me to achieve what I have so far is my wife, with unconditional support.

### If you could start your sporting career again, would you do anything differently?

I only spent two years training full-time for the Sydney Olympics, after my PhD. I would like to know what I could have achieved as a full-time athlete for a few more years.

### If you hadn't had a career in javelin, what would you have done?

When I was 18, I made a choice between javelin and cricket. I was a handy fast bowler, but could not do both sports in the summer.

### How do you remember your time at Bristol University?

I have extremely fond memories of being a student for seven years in Bristol, making great friends who I still see regularly. The first few years were not conducive to a sporting career with the amount of alcohol consumed,

but I found a good balance of sport and socialising when I started my PhD.

### What is your favourite sporting memory from your time at Bristol?

Throwing over 80 metres for the first time at the Olympic trials in Birmingham in 1996. It was televised just after an England v Scotland football game so lots of people saw it on *Grandstand*. I got back at midnight and went straight to the Hype '96 ball, where I was mobbed!

### What was the most enjoyable thing you did last week?

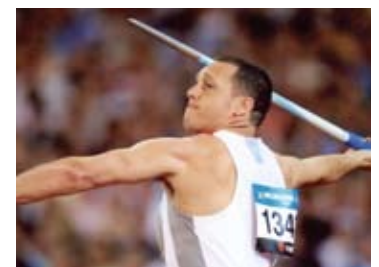
I took my one-year-old son swimming. It was great to see him jump into the water with no fear.

### Where will you be in an hour's time?

Once I've finished my work for the day I'll be off to the gym to do some rehab on my knee.

### Where will you be in ten years' time?

I will hopefully have a career in sport in some capacity (either coaching or strategy), and will have paid off my mortgage!



# The world of sport

**Jayne Pearce (BA 1986), former Athletic Union Sabbatical, is Press Chief for the 2012 Olympics. Last year's Communications and Campaigns Sabbatical Officer, Emma Henry (BA 2007), spoke to Jayne in Beijing.**



**“We won’t have the vastness, huge venues and the mobilisation of big numbers of human resources, but we will have iconic venues in a fantastic international city.”**

I was lucky to get an interview with Jayne Pearce. The super-busy Press Chief for the London 2012 Olympics is in Beijing and her schedule is hectic. Thankfully, she finds a ten-minute window for me. When I call, she is putting her four-year-old to bed – my first lesson in multitasking from this extremely successful woman.

Jayne was appointed Press Chief by the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games in May this year, something she describes as ‘a dream come true’. But what does this role actually involve? She is keen to stress that it is not PR. ‘I am responsible for the facilities for all media, not just British media,’ she explains. ‘It’s not PR but press operations, which is very different. My nationality is irrelevant.’

She is currently preparing for London 2012 by shadowing her Beijing equivalent in meetings and observing the press operations at different venues at the impressive 2008 Games. At the centre of the most successful Olympics for Team GB in over one hundred years, she describes the atmosphere as ‘electric’. ‘I am not actually in the village but it’s been really fantastic to see them do so well,’ she says.

Jayne’s career to date has included some remarkable achievements. She is the co-director of her own company, Pearce International, which she founded in 2001. It specialises in media operations for sporting events. She has worked on some of the world’s biggest sporting events, including five Olympic

Games, five football world cups and several world swimming events. She was responsible for managing 2,500 members of the media at the Sydney Olympics, which she describes as her greatest achievement to date.

Her aim in Beijing is to fill the gaps in her knowledge. ‘I already have 52 pages of notes,’ she laughs. ‘It’s important for me to focus on the smaller sports, which is the key thing really. For example, I haven’t done press operations for modern pentathlon or triathlon before.’

Jayne attributes much of her success to her time at Bristol where she immersed herself in sport. She was captain of the netball and basketball teams, played for the tennis team and achieved a Bristol Red in Netball – her ‘proudest moment’. She was also elected as the AU President from 1986–1987 working in the Students’ Union, which was an invaluable experience. ‘It taught me pragmatic lessons in sports administration,’ she explains. ‘I think we organised 40 sports on a tight budget. It taught me more than any abstract media theory could have for what I am doing now.’

She points out that London 2012 and Beijing 2008 are very different beasts. ‘We won’t have the same resources – human and/or financial – and we will be operating in a different culture. Every Olympics is different and we shouldn’t try to outdo each other. We won’t have the vastness, huge venues and the mobilisation of big numbers of human resources, but we will have iconic venues in a fantastic international city.’



### Olympic efforts for 2012

A number of Bristol alumni will be playing an important part in the London 2012 Olympics. It was announced in May 2008 that Jayne Pearce (BA 1986) will be heading up the press operations while Neil Wood (BSc 1986) will be taking the helm as Finance Director. Margaret Timmers (BA 1968) has recently published *A Century of Olympic Games Posters* showing the evolution of the Olympic Games poster, from the first official poster for Stockholm in 1912, right up to the present.

### Bristol/Kenya Olympic link-up

Bristol became the first city in the UK to confirm a partnership with another country in the run-up to the 2012 Olympics, thanks to the University's sporting links with Kenya. Kip Keino (Hon LLD 2007), the legendary Olympic champion, came to Bristol in September to launch the project, which will involve twinning schools, sporting collaboration with Bristol's professional clubs and Kenyan national sporting bodies, educational exchanges and cultural programmes. It will culminate in Bristol hosting the Kenyan team prior to the Olympic Games. Though this project is one which will involve the whole of the City of Bristol, the University is playing the leading role.

Kip Keino's links with the University were strengthened last year, when he was awarded an Honorary LLD.

Anyone interested in finding out more about the Bristol-Kenya project should contact Bob Reeves at bob.reeves@bristol.ac.uk.

## Alumni news

### Josh Lewsey returns for Alumni Sports Weekend

England rugby player Josh Lewsey (BSc 1998) was joined by over 100 sporting alumni at a special sporting event in April 2008. The event, which took place at the Coombe Dingle Sports Complex, included matches between past and present students in a variety of sports followed by a dinner in the University's Great Hall.

### Iain Callaghan rides Tour de France route

Iain Callaghan (BSc 2003) followed in the footsteps of his cycling heroes this year when he completed the 3,500km Tour de France route, covering the same route and distance as the professionals in the same 23 days as they took.

The route this year included 19 high mountains in the Alps and Pyrenees. Iain said: 'It's the aspiration of almost every cyclist to compete in the Tour but only a few are good enough. We're not good enough, so we did it by ourselves and in the process raised money for our chosen charities Macmillan and CLIC Sargent.'

### Alumni marathon effort

Twelve Bristol alumni ran the Flora London Marathon this year to raise money for the University's Cancer Research Fund. Nick Phillips (MEng 2005) recorded the fastest time, completing the race

in 3:20:32. Miles Beale (BA 1997) raised the most amount of money, gathering £3,852.42. The efforts of the group raised a grand total of £22,028.99.

### Everest appeal

2008 saw Matt Williams (MSc 2002) take a break from his work in renewable energy to climb Mount Everest. Matt reached the summit on 23 May, after two gruelling months climbing and living in base camp. He raised money from his climb for SOS Children's Villages.



### Iain Percy wins gold in Beijing

Bristol alumnus Iain Percy (BSc 1998) won a gold medal with crew Andrew Simpson in sailing's Star Class at the Beijing Olympic Games. In a close finish, Iain and Andrew finished just ahead of the Swedish boat in the medal race. Iain previously won a gold medal in the Finn class in the 2000 Sydney Olympics and was awarded an MBE in recognition of this achievement. Iain is currently 12th in the world rankings.

### Mountainbug wins Guardian acclaim

Bristol graduates Emma Todd (BSc 1999) and Rob Mason (MSc 2000) have made it into the *Guardian's* Top 100 Mountain Holidays with their outdoor activity centre Mountainbug. The centre specialises in cycling, canoeing, skiing and snow shoe holidays in the high Pyrenees of southern France.

