

TRAMPOLINING special



Steve Walsh with the latest news on the Northants Academy



■ **GLORY DAYS** – the Northants Academy under-11s, (from left to right, Daniel Essom, Sam Charlton, Matthew Wright and Alex Bucknall) and the under-11 girls grade six team (Claire McGowan, Jennifer McCallum, Ella Sidey and Abbie Fox) show off their medals

Huge medal haul for county youngsters

NORTHANTS ACADEMY lived up to their status as the dominant force in the east midlands last week, picking up 30 medals at a grade three to six competition in Ilkeston.

The event was the first for many from the club's satellite centres at Bishop Stopford School and Southfield Sports College, and according to coach Mandy Daybles, things couldn't have gone better.

"We were expecting mixed results but in the end it was very

pleasing," said Daybles. "For most competitors it was only their first or second competition and they all coped really well."

Daybles also heaped praise on the under-11 boys team, who picked up the top five positions as well as team gold.

"The lads were awesome and with the set-up here the sky's the limit for how far they want to go," she said.

Results: Grade 3: under-13 girls: Jasmin Mundy 1st; under-15 girls: Jadie Hodgson 3rd; under-18 girls: Eleanor Sawyer 3rd, Rachel Callis 5th; under-15 boys: David Belford 1st

Grade 4: under-13 girls: Natasha Bates 4th, Laura Moore 6th; under 11 boys: Scott Mackenzie 1st

Grade 5: under-9 girls: Lauren Wilson 3rd

Grade 6: under-9 girls: team 2nd, Joanna Bucknall 10th, Sarah Cushden 13th, Allana Berwick 15th; under 11 girls: Team 2nd, 4th & 5th, Abbie Fox 4th, Hannah Blatchley 8th, Shannon Dunkley 9th, Ella Sidey 10th, Alexandra Mackness 12th, Hannah Love 14th, Jennifer McCallum 15th, Shannon Mellish 18th, Lauren Button 19th, Claire McGowan 21st, Kayleigh Hawkins 22nd, Megan Pymm 23rd; Under 13 Girls: Team 1st & 2nd, Alice Hall 1st, Sara Bolton 2nd, Lucy Robinson 11th, Rebecca Rosetti 12th, Rhannon Labrum 16th, Chloe Barford 17th, Kirsty Stewart 20th, Cheryl Smith 23rd, Jessica Demidow 24th; Under 15 girls: Team 1st, 2nd & 3rd, Samantha Rosetti 1st, Emma Srett 3rd, Emma McGowan 4th, Rebecca Goadsby 5th, Lauren Fowler 8th, Rebekah May 10th, Susie Whall 11th, Lucy Hall 13th, Sophie Pound 15th, Elsie Berwick 16th; under 18 girls: team 1st, Natasha Winch 1st, Kerry Fox 5th, India Tomson 7th; under 9 boys: team 1st, Max Sidey 1st, Lawrence Beslin 2nd, Luke Cantillon 3rd; under 11 boys: team 1st, Alex Bucknall 1st, Edward Osbourne 2nd, Matthew Wright 3rd, Sam Charlton 4th, Daniel Essom 5th; under 13 boys: team 1st, Greg Hughes 2nd, Nathan Harris 3rd, Nathan Smith 6th

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■ **TRIPLE JOY** – the girls under-18s team (from left to right Natasha Winch, India Thompson and Kerry Fox) and the under-nine boys grade six squad (Max Sidey, Lawrence Beslin and Luke Cantillon)

Saints new boy bags try double

SAINTS' new academy signing Dylan Hartley bagged himself two tries as England beat Samoa 52-22 in the under-21s World Championship in Argentina.

The front-row forward was only called into the squad as a late replacement for the injured Newcastle Falcons prop David Wilson, but came on to the field after 45

By Sarah Carnell
Rugby Writer

minutes and scored a brace in the nine tries England scored.

Mark Hopley, who played 45 minutes at No 8 in Thursday's game, will join England squad mates Hartley and wing Paul Diggin at Franklin's Gardens.

Hopley had been rar-

ing to go as the championship started and was pleased with the back-row formation, saying: "As a unit I thought the back row did alright, but we made a few errors which we'll look at on the video and try to eradicate."

"I know I made a couple of personal mistakes which I wasn't very happy with and I'll work

on them in the week. Otherwise I thought the game went well."

But the former Worcester player admitted Samoa provided tough opposition.

"It was good to get out there and put a good run-out under our belts, but they put up a very strong fight," he said.

"But we're just glad to have got it over and

done with and come away with the result we wanted."

England will meet South Africa on Monday in their second pool match and have been watching their next opponents carefully.

Hopley added: "Watching the South Africans, they look like a very good side and we'll have to be at our best."

Rob WHITE
Record-breaking County batsman writes for you

Crusaders will be out for revenge

After a welcome week of rest from cricket, the players are looking forward to getting back in the middle tomorrow for a crucial totesport clash against the Middlesex Crusaders.

Nearly a month ago we knocked Middlesex out of the C&G cup after a nail-biting finish.

The Crusaders will be out for revenge, and if this game proves to be half as entertaining as the first encounter it would be well worth coming down to Wantage Road and supporting the Steelbacks in our push towards the top of the table.

We sit in fourth place with the benefit of games in hand on those above us, and still have to play the leaders twice.

One-day cricket is all about momentum, and if we continue to win tight games like our last win against Hampshire we won't be far away come the end of the season.

The next few weeks will certainly be a festival of one-day cricket for the supporters, with both totesport clashes and the lively Twenty20 Cup games coming fast and furious in an extremely busy schedule for the county.

This period of one-day cricket is undoubtedly a huge opportunity for the club to encourage and entice new fans through the gates at Wantage Road.

Whether you are a staunch traditionalist whose blood boils at the idea of our county ground being invaded by bouncy castles and various other gimmicks, or you are a lover of the shorter form of cricket, it is an opportunity to boost the popularity of the game we cannot afford to miss.

As a county cricket team we act as guardians of the game in this country, and we cannot expect our county championship gates to increase unless we go out and promote the game to people around the county.

This is the primary reason we'll be playing one-day matches in the next few weeks at Stowe School and Campbell Park in Milton Keynes, to attract new supporters who perhaps haven't had the opportunity, or

live too far away from Wantage Road. I have even heard that Stowe may be keen to start a festival week of cricket next year, along similar lines to the Cheltenham festival.

As an ex-pupil at Stowe I might be slightly biased when considering this idea, but as long as the facilities and pitch can be prepared to first-class standards, only positives can be gained from the experience.

I can remember visiting the Colchester festival when I was younger and honing my skills at a very young age behind the marquees as the players I was attempting to emulate battled it out in the middle.

Perhaps the next Northants great is just waiting to be inspired by a David Sales innings or a hostile spell from Johan Louw.

The start of the Twenty20 competition is bound to open up the debates surrounding the merits of such a competition, and the effects it has on the techniques of top players.

It has been common to hear pundits suggest that the slog-a-ball attitude of the Twenty20 Cup interferes with the MCC purist techniques all of our county players aim for. The idea that to win the Twenty20 Cup all you have to do is put your foot down to every ball and wildly slog across the line is a complete fallacy.

It is true that in such a short form of the game more risks will be taken and more players will sacrifice their wickets in the name of the team.

More and more the art of destructive batting and bowling at the death are seen as cricketing roles requiring as much of a finely-tuned technique as opening the batting in a four-day game. They are certainly very different techniques, but both require hours of practice in the nets.

Increasingly the role of batting and bowling at the death can decide one-day encounters. This is one reason why perhaps we have been successful in one-day cricket this season, as both Damien Wright and Johan Louw are fantastic death bowlers, and our lower-order are all hard-striking batsmen.