

# Personal Best



**Issue 1 - Summer 2004**

**Park House School & Sports College Newsletter**

## Why all the logos?

It's no wonder we have no room for letters on our school notepaper! These logos represent some very significant achievements:

**Sports College** – we are one of 268 schools awarded this Specialist Status on the basis of our plan to raise whole school standards and enhance wider community sports provision.

**Sportsmark Gold** – the top national award for the quality of school-based curricular and extra-curricular PE and Sport.

**Artsmark Gold** – the equivalent for Art, Drama and Music of the Sportsmark Gold. We are one of only 18 schools in the country to hold both awards simultaneously!

**Youth Sports Trust** – the national body which works to develop sporting opportunities for young people and provides support to all Sports Colleges.

**Investors in People** – an award which recognises the quality of support given to all staff in helping them fulfil their roles at the school – supporting students to achieve their personal bests!



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



The New Sven?  
NVQ football coaching students  
putting each other through their paces.

PHOTO: Dave Hine Sports Photography

## It wasn't like that in my day!

A generation ago, sport education was a concept likely to inspire as much dread as it would achievement. In the minds of those whose sporting heroes weren't backed by entire marketing teams, and in many cases pursued their careers as amateurs, Physical Education meant freezing afternoons on a muddy pitch, or the breathless trek to the changing room after a cross-country run. Those who recall such times with fondness were likely to be those who already had a talent or enthusiasm for sport. The stragglers, in every sense, were often left behind.

How times have changed. The evolution in Sport Education can be seen in colleges and schools across the country, the emphasis no longer just on searching for a potential player for the local professional club, or the plucky kid who might do well in the regional championships. The accent these days is on inclusion, a genuine 'sport for all' approach that sees children of all abilities, seek to achieve the best they can in a broad sporting context, and to then take that approach to their academic studies, to their future careers, and to their lives beyond their years in education.

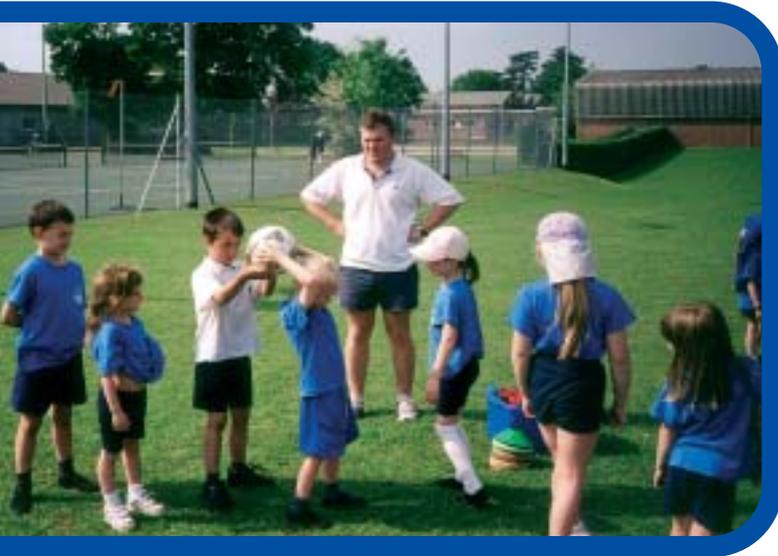
That's what we aim for here in Park House School and Sports College. Our focus isn't on unearthing the next generation of Rooneys and Radcliffes – although we'll be delighted if we do – but to provide a robust educational programme where involvement in sport complements the more traditional studies our students undertake. It's not about beating the competition, but about setting yourself new standards and, as the Olympian ethos has it, it is not the winning that it is important so much as the taking part!

You might be surprised by the range of activities we offer, and projects we are involved in here at the Sports College. This, the first issue of Personal Best, provides a brief look into what is on the curriculum here, the support for physical education and sport in our region, our links with the wider community and the opportunities that have opened for some of our students here.

**Personal best?**  
**It's what everyone here**  
**is striving for...**

# Raising the bar for School Sports...

**There's been much talk recently about the physical fitness of the younger generation. At Park House School and Sports College, we're not just talking, but taking action.**



It's no secret that the government sees improving the overall health of the general population as a major concern. Media coverage in recent times has implied that poor diet and a lack of exercise could contribute to an unfit population, whose state of health could have far-reaching consequences for our health system.

That's the talk, but what's actually being done to improve the nation's health? You might be surprised to learn that the answer is, well, quite a lot actually, and there are visible signs of it throughout Park House School and Sports College. Kathryn Martin's job is focused on developing initiatives to increase levels of participation within schools in the Newbury area. Based at the Sports College,

Kathryn heads the Schools Sports Co-ordinator Programme in the area and, in her role she has responsibility for improving the standards of PE and increasing the numbers of pupils who are actively taking part in it.

"The programme is being gradually rolled out throughout the UK, and eventually most schools will belong to it, explains Kathryn. "The Sports College here is the 'hub of the wheel' locally, and there are 31 schools which I cover – five secondary, two special schools and 24 primaries. Each secondary school has a co-ordinator, who is a staff member, and each secondary school has a family of primary schools beneath it. The overall objective of the programme is to raise the quality of PE in schools and the number of young people involved in it, and the quality and availability of after-school sports activities,

with a view to ensuring kids are doing two hours of sport or PE every week."

Although she's only been in the role since September 2003, Kathryn has been very encouraged by what she has already seen in terms of the range of activities students are getting involved in. "There are loads of examples locally of kids now doing sport they wouldn't have been doing this time last year," she says. Such as? "Well, here at Park House students come over from Emborne School to take part in team games along with tennis and touch rugby, all run by the schools sports co-ordinators and staff, who are also training students as Junior Sports Leaders to take over – freeing up staff time. I know that some of the schools which are part of the scheme are working with Greenacres Tennis Club and Goring Tennis Club, and there are now eight primary schools with kids doing tennis who weren't doing it this time last year."

The scheme has also led to additional local sports clubs and groups getting involved with after schools sports. Newbury Table Tennis Club and Theale and Tilehurst Cricket Club are both now working with schools, while members of Newbury Rugby Club have given children from Castle Special School their first taste of 'tag rugby' – "...and very well it went too," confirms Kathryn.

It would seem that the scheme is about to get bigger, with an

additional amount of funding having been allocated by the National Lottery to maintain the momentum built up so far. "Our application has been successful and we'll be funded to support an increase in out-of-hours activities over the next three years," confides Kathryn. "It means that every school in the partnership will benefit."

The programme also provides training for teachers, who can in turn train students in a variety of additional activities. Kathryn has been involved in initiatives such as 'Step into Sport', which is a sports education workshop designed to increase the leadership skills of the teachers who attend. All of this Kathryn cites as evidence of the School Sports Co-ordinator programme gathering pace in the Newbury area.

It's fair to say that the Programme looks set to have a positive impact on sports education and training, and it's clear that, in the year she's been involved, Kathryn has seen a lot to justify her undoubted enthusiasm towards the scheme. "There has been a lot of success – substantial success – already," she says. "There are more teachers involved, more out-of-hours clubs in place and, most importantly, more young people are experiencing sports they had never been involved in before. That's where this programme is really having an effect."



# BEST FEET FORWARD...

**Dance has been an integral part of the PE Curriculum at Park House for fifteen years.**

**Everyone dances at Park House School and Sports College. No, not just the girls, but all the students! There's never been any fuss made of it, it's just an accepted, and much valued, part of the PE curriculum, and the College is now seen as a centre of excellence for dance throughout West Berkshire.**

According to Sue Llewellyn, head of dance at the Sports College, involvement in dance can help students succeed in most other areas of study. "If students are successful at dance, their confidence can be boosted and, in terms of posture and movement, they can feel more positive about themselves, which I believe is often taken forward to all other areas of study."

Remarkably, Sue has been teaching dance at Park House for fifteen years. "Originally it came under the umbrella of music, and I was brought in for just one term," she recalls, "but it was so well received by the years 7 and 8 students who were doing it that it was extended out to other years, and it became part of the curriculum, as part of PE."

The ready-acceptance and appeal of dance among students comes as no surprise for Sue. For her, the simplicity of her subject makes it an attractive option for everyone at the Sports College. "Dance can be successful at any level," she says. "You don't need a bat, a ball, to be able to catch or throw, but you can participate regardless of natural ability, or even if you are physically challenged. You can enter at a relatively low-level and still put on a good performance, whoever you are. Dance is always inclusive, which is part of the reason why the government and the department of education have acknowledged the role it plays here."

Inclusive as dance may be, there are some success stories too, which have arisen – and continue to arrive from the Sports College's long association with dance. The college is now viewed as a centre of excellence for dance, and attracts and nurtures gifted and talented students from across West Berkshire. Increasingly, students are going on from the Sports College to study dance at university, and Sue is justifiably pleased that more and more students are choosing dance, within the PE curriculum, as an A-level option.

While Sue feels a certain amount of satisfaction from the increased interest in dance from students in the college, what she enjoys perhaps above all else about her job, is to witness the performances which involve virtually all the students at the Sports College. "We have three performances every year, each one involving 250 pupils, and they are

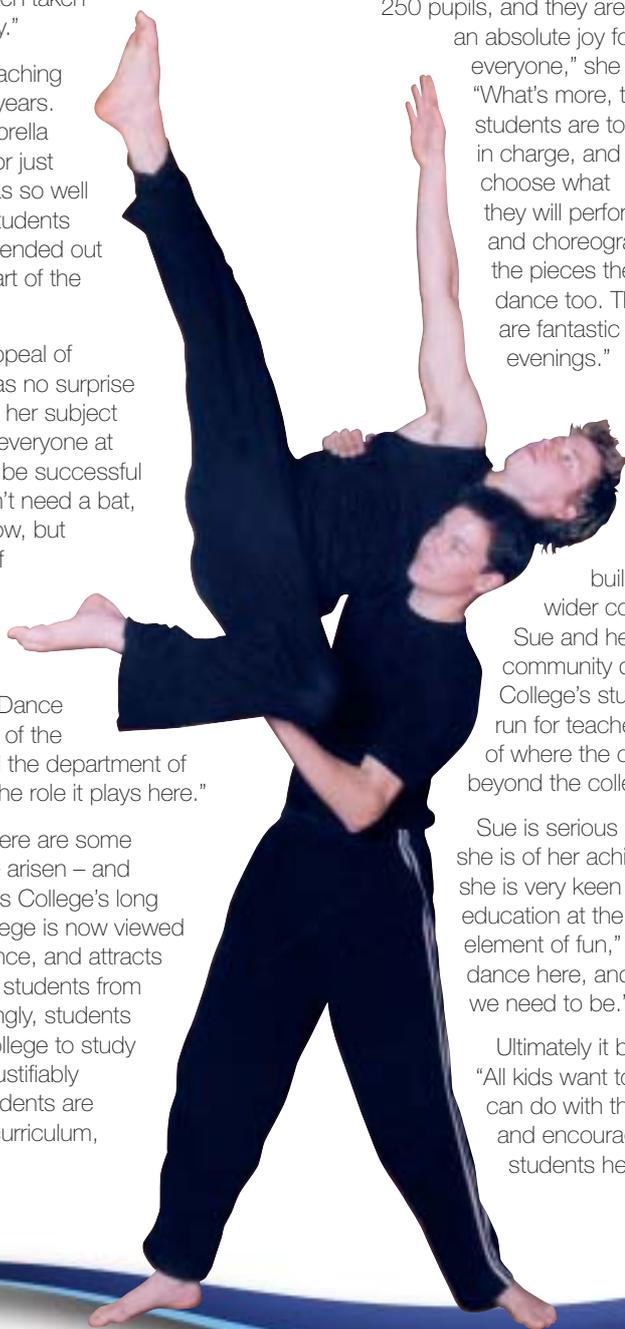
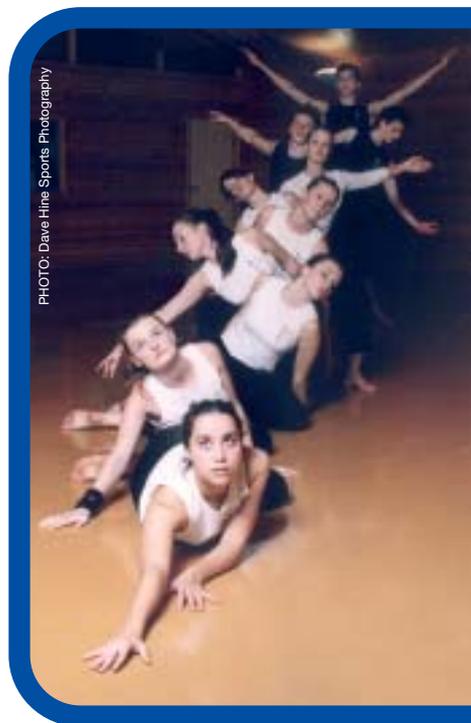
an absolute joy for everyone," she says. "What's more, the students are totally in charge, and they choose what they will perform, and choreograph the pieces they dance too. They are fantastic evenings."

In future, Sue would like to involve some of the children from the Castle Special School with which the Sports College has established some very strong links. Indeed 'outreach work', through which the Sports College builds and expands its work within the wider community, is a very high priority for Sue and her department. She cites the community dance programme they run at the College's studio, and the training courses she has run for teachers in the area, as further examples of where the college is expanding its dance remit beyond the college itself.

Sue is serious about her role, and justifiably proud as she is of her achievements to date, but there is one factor she is very keen to stress about the part dance plays in education at the Sports College. "There has to be an element of fun," she says. "We're not precious about dance here, and we're never more serious about it than we need to be."

Ultimately it boils down to basic human behaviour. "All kids want to jump, run, stretch – to explore what they can do with their bodies," she explains. "Dance allows and encourages them to do all this, which is why the students here are so enthusiastic about it."

PHOTO: Dave Hine Sports Photography



# Some positive results...

While it's not the winning that counts but the taking part, we still like to recognise success. Here we highlight just a few of our national and local results from this year:



PHOTO: Dave Hine Sports Photography

## Trampolining Squad – UK National Schools Competition

After qualifying in the Isle of Wight our trampolining squad came 5th overall in the National Schools Competition in Birmingham.



## Football – National Schools Sports Colleges Cup

In the FA run competition our year 7s made it through to the final at England's training camp, Bisham Abbey:

Round 1 Bye

Round 2 v John Cabot (a) W 9–1

Round 3 v Brighton Hill (a) W 5–0

Round 4 v Paignton (a) W 5–3

Qtr Finals – walkover

Semi-Final v Eltham Green (h) W 7–1

Final v Archbishop Beck L 2–1

Squad: George Sage, Adam Locke (c), Joe Lawrence, Mark Yeoman, Bertie Lewis, Grant Osbourne, Aaron Stockley, Nicky Sprules, Matthew Locke, Curtis Angell, Oly Graham, Marc Forrest, Ryan Shepherd, Sam Tankard, Charlie Allsop, Jamie Young.

## Athletics – Reading Schools League

Our Year 7s and 8s competed against 12 other schools over three rounds of competition and progressed through to the Cup Final. Here both teams finished - a fantastic result! Our Year 10 and 11 boys went one better in retaining the overall title for a second year.

## Rugby – Under 15s Daily Mail Cup

After wins over Pangbourne College and Theale Green the team eventually lost in the 3rd round to Windsor Boys despite scoring 34 points (49–34).

# TRANSFER NEWS

We wish **Ian Ferris** good luck in his new role as Director of Sport at Wallingford School – newly designated as a Sports College in 2004. Thanks to Ian for all his help in developing the Specialist Ethos at Park House!



We look forward to **Yvonne Hayes** joining us as Ian's replacement as Director of Sport in September. Yvonne is currently head of PE at Preston Manor School, appropriately in Wembley!

We would also like to wish our Schools Sports Co-Ordinator **Jo Czerpak** luck in his move to teach in Abu Dabbi. Thanks to Jo for his hard work!

## A new signing...

### Table Tennis Coaching

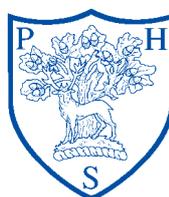
is now available at Newbury's Table Tennis Centre here at Park House. Beginners are welcome – our experienced players are there to guide you along. You could also make new friends while being coached!

All standards are welcome:

- Beginners
- Improvers
- All ages – male or female
- Bats & balls provided
- 10 tables
- Juniors pay only £1.50 per session

Every Tuesday between 7.00pm and 9.30pm in the main hall at Park House.

For further info call Chris Weller on 0118 983 2769 / 07831 877 166 or email [hobgoblin2000@totalise.co.uk](mailto:hobgoblin2000@totalise.co.uk)



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