

# GYMNAST

British Gymnastics Official Magazine  
November 2012



*Rugby stars take  
on the trampoline*

## Amanda Reddin

New Women's Head National Coach

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Keep in touch...

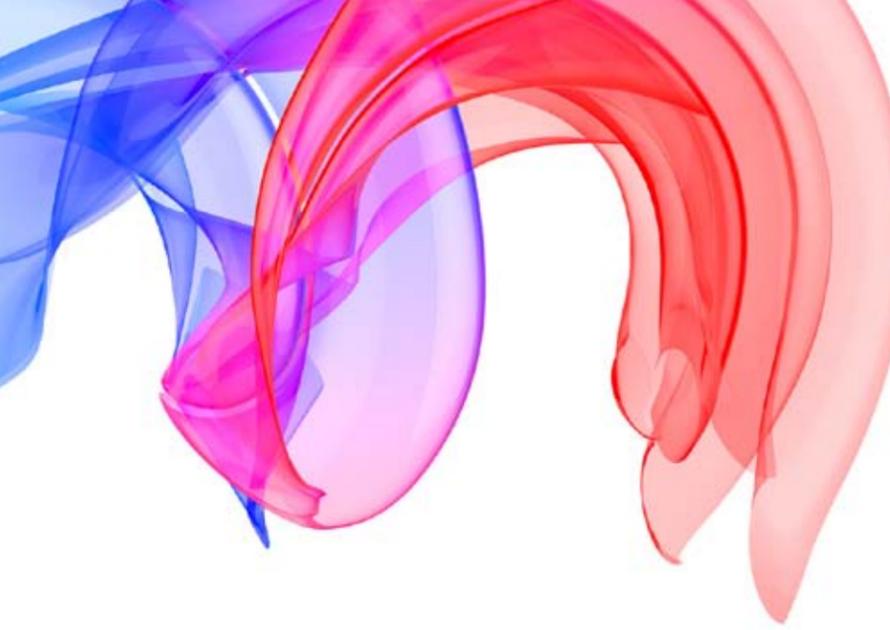


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Cover - Amanda Reddin (Thom Anderson)



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Volume 50 Issue 9

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Welcome to the BGMediaTeam twitter wall - check out this month's tweets from the top gymnasts...

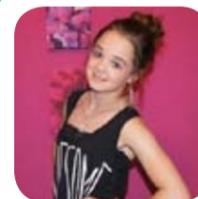
# tweet wall



**Hannah Whelan** @HannahkWhelan  
Love that I've just been on the phone to @ImogenCairns for an hour!!! Night time now :)



**Brinn Bevan** @brinnbevan  
My bath was to #perfection today not to hot not to cold #amateurnomore



**Angel Romaeo** @xangelromaeox  
Really needs a roast dinner!! :)



**Kayvon Arasteh** @kayvon\_21  
Just carried an old woman's suitcase up two flights of stairs because it was too heavy for her #TopGent



**Jennifer Pinches** @jempin515  
 Just come back from the AMAZON, at an internet cafe now. Had fun teaching English in their tiny school & built the village kids a playground!



**Nile Wilson** @NileMW  
 Physio making me look like a transformer :) haha #optimus



**Becky Downie** @Bdownie  
 @elliedownie just asked me for tape to use in the shower? Why ... so she can wash her hair without getting shampoo in her rips!! #hardweek



**Jade Faulkner** @jadefaulkner  
 “@UberFacts: 30 minutes of exercise and movement can make you 10% smarter.” So I should be like Einstein right?



**Rachel Smith** @Gymnast\_Rachel  
 Lets get this party started, My favourite gymnastics pose #WOJB #liftyourlegup #dosomethinbendy



**Dan Keatings** @DanKeatings  
 I feel so old calling 10:20 a lie in lol first time iv been in bed past 830 for like 2 weeks haha #gettinggold



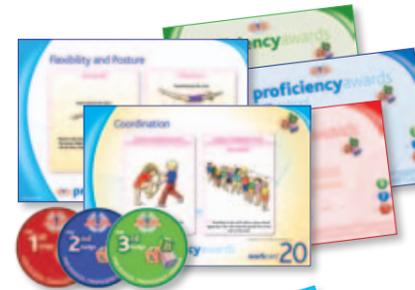
**Ruby Harrold** @RubyHarrold  
Dad let me buy a learner sticker for my future car today. Watch out world :D



**Annie Bartlett** @AnnieBarts  
BIG SMILES... This is so funny @lynnehutch94 @jadefaultkner @francescafox1



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# Amanda Reddin

By Tim Peake

*“I owe everything in my career to Amanda.”*

Beth Tweddle

British Gymnastics recently announced the appointment of Amanda Reddin to the role of Head National Coach. An Olympian herself in 1984, Amanda as Head Coach at the City of Liverpool has enjoyed unrivalled success culminating in three of her gymnasts – Beth Tweddle, Hannah Whelan and Jennifer Pinches – forming the five-strong history-making Olympic team at London 2012.

We thought who better to ask about Amanda's coaching credentials than Beth Tweddle, the most decorated artistic gymnast in British history, who Amanda guided to three World titles, six European titles and finally the all-important Olympic bronze....



Amanda showing her caring side with reassuring words for Beth



“At every competition **you need someone** who is cool, calm and collected... and that’s **Amanda.**”

**What is it about Amanda’s coaching style that worked so well for you?**

Amanda is brilliant in the fact that she treats everyone as an individual; she picks up the little details on people and can adapt the training to suit. There’s days when you turn up for training not in the mood and she knows to recognise the signs and work with you.

Her knowledge is vast; every competition she goes to she’s always learning. At internationals there is always a notebook and she is jotting down ideas for her gymnasts. She has coached at major championships over three decades and she competed at the very highest level. She knows it’s scary, she knows there are days you don’t want to do it and she understands what you’re going through and the best ways to work

through that. At every competition you need someone who is cool, calm and collected and that’s Amanda.

She does all the hard work beforehand so on the day you know your job so there would be no need to panic. She can bring all this experience to the national team not only for the gymnasts, but also to the coaches.

Beth on  
her way to  
Olympic  
bronze on  
uneven bars



**Can you remember your first meeting with Amanda and how you felt?**

When I first met Amanda, I'll be honest, I was a bit scared, I'd moved to a bigger club and expected it would be harder and stricter. Strict isn't actually the way it worked though. Amanda expects you to do the work and if you do then it's fine. Her ethos is to train hard and she'll work with you, she doesn't like people messing about in the gym and I feel the same way. We've shared the same outlook and passion for gymnastics and that's why it's worked so well for us.

Over the years of course our relationship has changed. Amanda has learned and adapted along the way as much as I have, she understands my priorities in life and how I work, like she does with all the gymnasts she coaches.

**How has your relationship worked when it comes to the more difficult moment, for example after the disappointment of Beijing?**

You get a lot of coaches who will sit down and talk through things but that hasn't really happen with Amanda, I think we both just know. After Beijing she knew I found it difficult and it was the same for her. She had the same dream and had put in the same work so it was hard. She left me alone, I went on holiday and then it was me that contacted her and said 'right I'm ready, when can I come back?' and she was already ready for me. I think she has the ability to always put my mind at ease and when I had problems she would always be one step ahead with solutions.



Beth and Amanda celebrating their Olympic bronze medal

***So to win the Olympic bronze in London was obviously a huge dream come true for you, but how much of that was also for Amanda?***

When it came to the Olympics the relief was for both of us. Amanda has been involved in many Games very successfully but to take three gymnasts to the London Games is an achievement many people can't even dream of and shows what a brilliant coach she is. Between myself, Hannah and Jenni we are all very different characters but she's worked with us all individually and as a team and it's clearly worked.

To then win the bronze medal I saw her relief and part of me thought 'thank God I haven't left her without an Olympic medal'. As a partnership we won everything; Worlds, Europeans, every title apart from that medal and I didn't want her ever to be thought of as the best coach to never to win an Olympic medal so it was right for her that we won the Olympic bronze, I owe everything in my career to Amanda."

*“Amanda has been involved in many Games very successfully but to take three gymnasts to the **London Games** is an achievement many people can't even dream of and shows what a **brilliant coach** she is.”*

Catherine  
Lyons -  
2012 Espoir  
British  
champion



# TAMING THE LYON

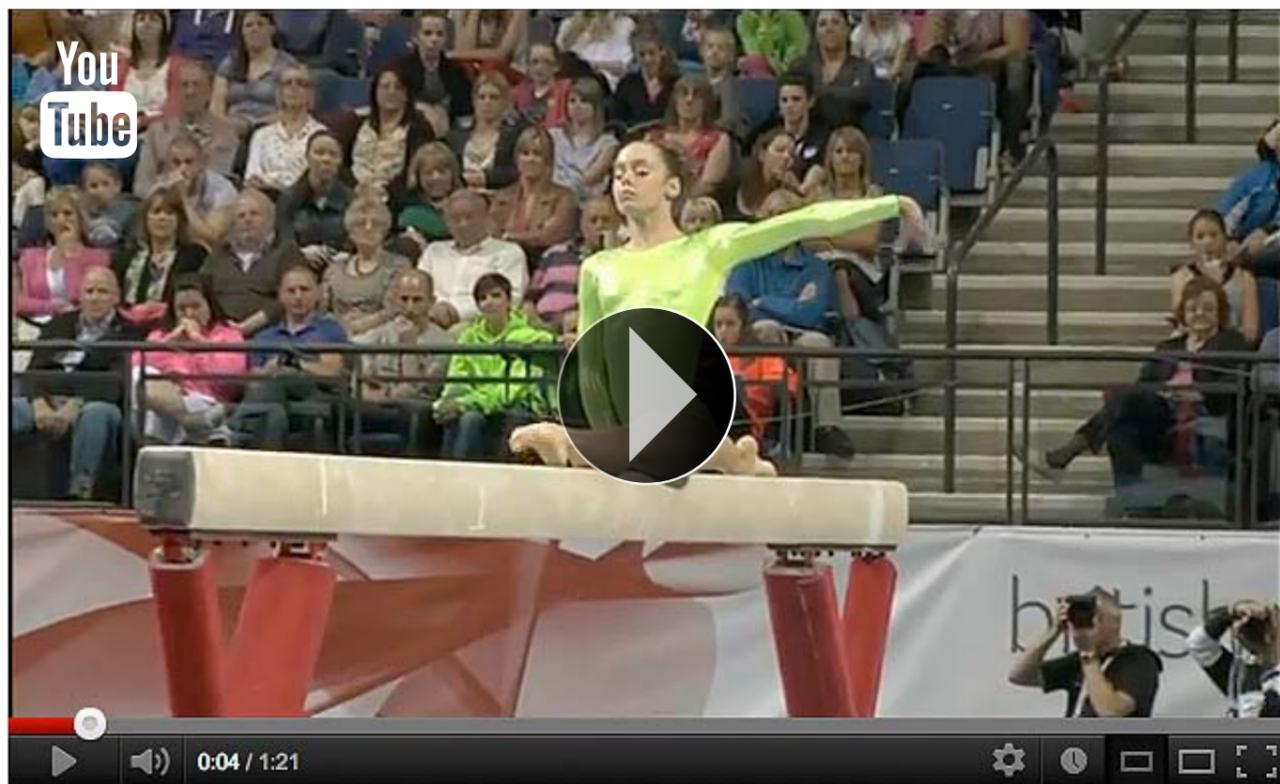
*the beauty of gymnastics*

Catherine Lyons  
& Rochelle Douglas

By Olivia Howard

In 2012, twelve year-old Catherine Lyons from Europa Gymnastics Club was not only crowned the Espoir British champion in her first year in this category but she was also presented with the prestigious Artistry Award at the British Championships ahead of gymnasts twice her age.

From the moment Catherine began to compete at national level she had a big impact on gymnastics fans. Her powerful presence and artistic flair bought her many admirers from not only Great Britain but from all over the world. Her beautiful choreographed routines and focus on artistry is an approach that many feared had been lost from the sport and being able to produce such expression at such a young age certainly makes her stand out from the crowd. Described by her coach Rochelle Douglas as a lion on the competition floor, Catherine is confident and determined to succeed but meeting her one Friday afternoon in the new Europa Centre, she could be not more different from what you would expect; a quiet yet polite and happy young girl who loves her gymnastics and just having fun. So we decided to find out the secret to her success...



**CHECK OUT CATHERINE'S PERFORMANCE ON BEAM AT THIS YEAR'S BRITISH CHAMPIONSHIPS**

**TELL US HOW YOUR GYMNASTICS JOURNEY BEGAN?**

I had a lot of energy when I was younger and did ballet to try and help but it wasn't enough. I agreed to go to gymnastics classes but I didn't actually know what it was until I went to a club. I went to an after school club where I met Rochelle and from then on I began to progress and move up levels and I knew she was the best coach that I could be with. I now train five times a week and travel for an hour to training.

**THAT'S A LOT OF TRAVELLING - DO YOU HAVE ANY SPARE TIME?**

On Thursdays, which is my day off, I go to a glee club with my big sister. It's singing and dancing which I really enjoy. My sister is going to college next year so I just want to spend as much time as I can with her.

**CONGRATULATIONS ON WINNING THE ARTISTRY AWARD, HOW DID IT FEEL TO RECEIVE IT?**

Winning the Artistry Award at the British Championships was a big surprise; because I fell on floor I thought that everything was gone so I was really happy to have won it. I really enjoy dancing and spend a lot of time on it to make sure it is just as perfect as my moves. Rochelle is such a great choreographer and it has helped me understand dance a lot more. I have started to make up little sections of my routine which I really enjoy and if Rochelle approves it, it will go in. I haven't really had

**“BEAM IS MY FAVOURITE PIECE BECAUSE NOT ONLY DO I LIKE PERFORMING BUT I LIKE THE DANGER.”**

Catherine Lyons

much experience, the ballet when I was younger was very basic but I do really enjoy it - I like learning new things!

**YOU SOUND LIKE A PRO. WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHER GYMNASTS WHO AREN'T AS CONFIDENT IN PERFORMING?**

You just have to perform your routines a lot in the gym. Sometimes there isn't an audience in training but you have to still perform no matter what and then when you get to a competition it's no different. I remember my first ever regionals routine, I told my dad I just had to block everyone out and show off as much as I could. Everyone's human you have to have nerves but you have to try and block some of it out and just do your best.

**YOU HAVE BEEN WITH YOUR COACH ROCHELLE FOR A LONG TIME, HOW WELL DO YOU GET ON?**

We have a great relationship. You have to trust your coach and I know Rochelle always knows what's best for me. I think it helps that she used to be a gymnast, as if I am in a bad mood she knows what it's like and what to do to get me out of it. We don't always get on, I have bad days but then you have the good days as well and mostly they're good. It's ok because when things are bad we always make up.

**YOU WERE TOO YOUNG FOR THIS YEAR'S OLYMPICS BUT WHAT WAS YOUR LONDON EXPERIENCE LIKE?**

I went three times to the gymnastics at the Olympics, it was amazing. I also had Gabby Douglas's (2012 AA Olympic Champion) host family, aunty and nan stay over at my house. It was very inspirational to have them around, her family were incredible and it was really nice learning about Gabby and what she does in her spare time.

**ARE THERE ANY NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL GYMNASTS THAT YOU LOOK UP TO?**

I really like Gabby Douglas as she looks like she is always enjoying the sport and I like Hannah Whelan's style and how she shows off everything she does. I also like Beth of course because she is so inspiring. She is older than the average gymnast

and not many people get to that stage so it's amazing what she has achieved.

**YOU COMPETED ON A PODIUM FOR THE FIRST TIME THIS YEAR, HOW ARE YOU DEALING WITH THE INCREASING PRESSURE?**

I liked having a bigger crowd at the Echo arena (2012 British Championships); I think it helped me win the Artistry Award as there was a lot more pressure to perform to everyone. I'm very determined at a competition and in general I don't tend to speak to people apart from Rochelle as I like to keep focused. If

for example I'm preparing for floor in the corner I will prepare for the moves in my head and I might even say a little prayer.

**FINALLY, WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS FOR THE FUTURE?**

I suppose every gymnast wants to get to the Olympics but Rochelle has told me that only five people get to go and I will be the youngest in 2016, so I shouldn't make that my ultimate goal. Europeans are my main goal at the moment and I would like to try and medal in that one day.



# THE COACH'S VERDICT

## Rochelle Douglas

**Rochelle Douglas was an International gymnast from 1994 to 2000 and competed at European and World Championships, only just missing out on the 2000 Olympics. After she retired from gymnastics, Rochelle took a couple of years away and then realised that she had some unfulfilled dreams and started at a local club where her girls quickly started to progress. She began to take it more seriously and move into the elite end of the sport. We caught up with Rochelle to find out about her relationship with Catherine, her thoughts on the importance of artistry and her top tips for success...**

### **HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU THINK ARTISTRY IS IN GYMNASTICS AND HOW DO YOU IMPLEMENT IT?**

I've been quite lucky from the minute I started coaching I have just always liked beautiful gymnastics so I have been fortunate in the way that the women's artistic code of points have gone as it has worked in

my favour. I spend a lot of time on attention to detail but I'm not necessarily the best choreographer, if you watch the routines they are actually quite basic but it is how I give the confidence to the gymnasts to perform and the amount of time I spend making sure it's correct which is key. If you watch Catherine when she was very young she wasn't the best mover but

as her confidence grew, if I showed her something she was willing to do it, exactly how I would do it. Now I have her at the top of the tree, when the younger kids come through they all want to be like her so it's just like a knock on effect for them all.

### **WHAT MAKES CATHERINE SO SPECIAL?**

She is a hard worker and a perfectionist but I think Catherine's main strength is her ability to perform and strive in competition. I would say it is a different gymnast that turns up to competition, I have Catherine who's happy and a bit clumsy in training and a lion that turns up to the competition. She is willing to do whatever it is I ask of her, which is tough because with the artistry on beam for example she could do a perfect routine and land every single skill and I may still make her do it all again because of something simple such as an arm or foot position that wasn't correct.

### **SO WHAT'S YOUR SECRET? HOW DO YOU PRODUCE SUCH ARTISTIC GYMNASTS?**

I don't really set any time aside specifically for just dance but if they are doing the routines they have to perform the dance properly or the routine won't count. We won't spend lots of time just doing complex or just dance because we don't have that many hours. Catherine doesn't really come out of school or anything so she has

to be perfect in her four hour training session. When we are preparing for competition, Catherine and my other gymnasts perform their routines every single session, they add in the drama that you see in competition so when they step to the competition floor it's just natural for them.

*Catherine with coach Rochelle Douglas*





**ONE OF OUR READERS WANTED TO KNOW WHERE YOU GET YOUR INSPIRATION FROM FOR CATHERINE'S UNIQUE SKILLS?**

We like to have a play around and create a skill that suits Catherine for example she has quite a unique spin on beam. Back in 2009 she couldn't do the regular spin with her leg held in front so we had a play around and made it so that it worked for her then we gradually took it to the next level. Catherine is now very creative on beam with her dance and skills. At the English Championships she wobbled on nearly every skill, not that you would know as she danced out of everything, it didn't even look like my routine and nobody would have noticed, she is very good at dance movement and she

said she would like to start choreographing some of the routines.

**DO YOU HAVE ANY TIPS FOR OTHER COACHES?**

Make sure the gymnasts understand how important artistry is, make them look at gymnasts and show the difference between one that is showing off and one that is not. I think a lot of gymnasts feel shy to perform, so I have taught my gymnasts to thrive on showing off and that's how they can get extra attention. If you're making up a routine you don't have to be the best choreographer but if you go at it full throttle then the gymnast is going to have the confidence to copy you and I am happy to jump and throw myself around on the floor to give them the confidence to come out of their shells. Even if

it doesn't happen straight away you begin with simple dance and as they grow in confidence you start building it up and bringing in all the finer details.

**WHAT ARE YOUR HOPES FOR THE FUTURE FOR CATHERINE?**

I'm trying to make Catherine not focus too much on the Olympics and just take each comp as it comes. She is still so young, to make 2016 the be all and end all if it doesn't happen we will struggle to see her through. I want it to be in the back of her mind but to focus first on all the major competitions that are going to come before that. We need to start increasing difficulty but keeping the execution down as I won't let her move on until she's ready.

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# Kitbag In the

This month South Essex gymnast **Brinn Bevan**, part of the junior European gold medal winning team give the Gymnast a look in his kit bag...

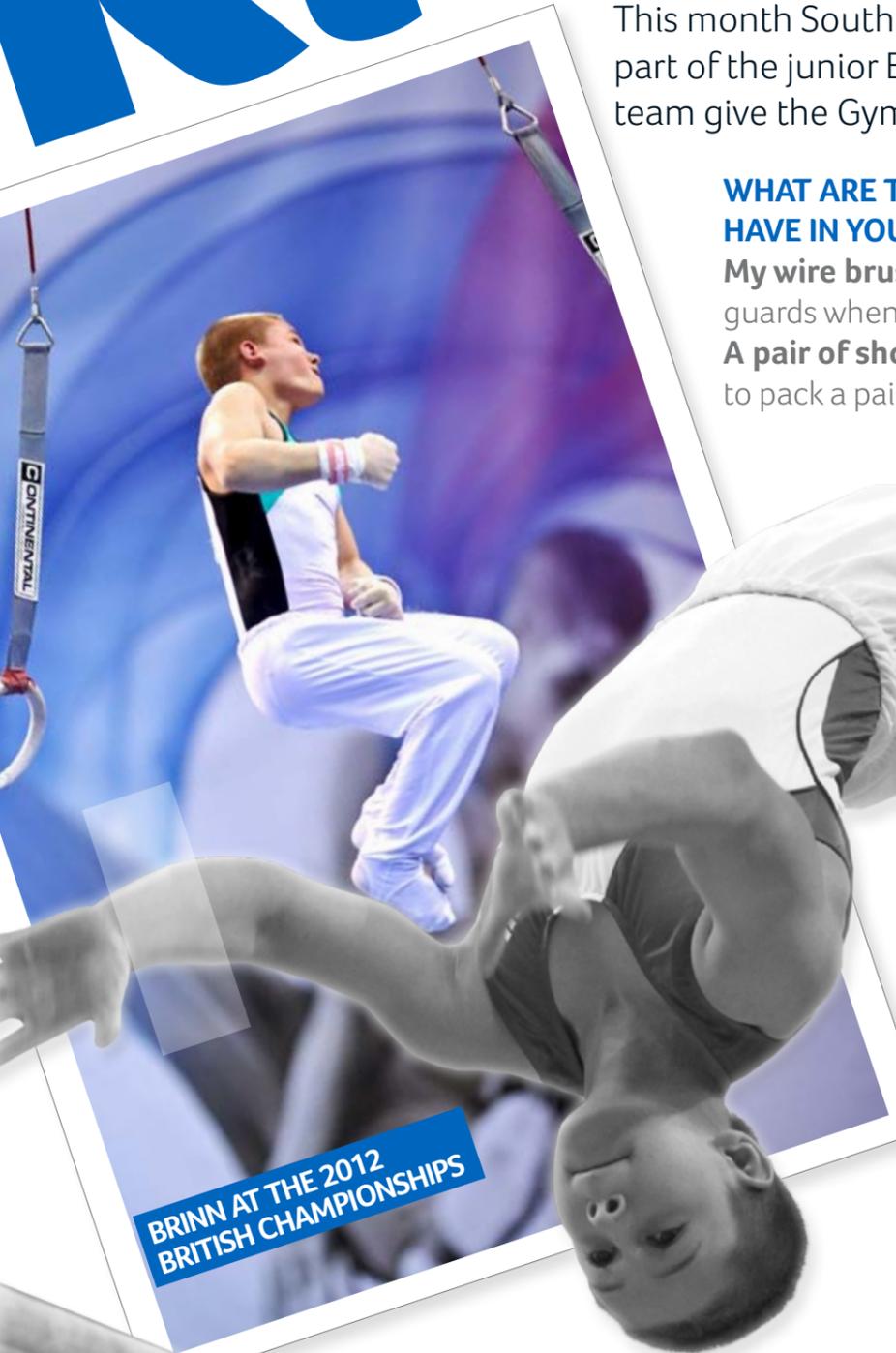
## WHAT ARE THE THREE THINGS YOU ALWAYS HAVE IN YOUR GYM BAG AND WHY?

**My wire brush** - this is to help with my hand guards when they feel a little slippery.  
**A pair of shorts** - a spare pair in case I forget to pack a pair.

**My competition gear** - when I go abroad I put half of my GB kit in my hand luggage just in case my suitcase gets lost. This has happened before and I had to wait three days for it to arrive at the hotel.

## DO YOU HAVE ANY LUCKY MASCOTS OR THINGS YOU TAKE TO COMPS?

When the Olympic teams were pre training at our gym



BRINN AT THE 2012 BRITISH CHAMPIONSHIPS



BRINN (SECOND LEFT) AS PART OF THE JUNIOR EUROPEAN TEAM... L-R: NILE WILSON, BRINN, JAY THOMPSON, COURTNEY TULLOCK AND FRANK BAINES

a New Zealand gymnast gave me a lucky necklace. I like to wear it and keep it with me all the time, it said on the packaging it was to bring me good luck and prosperity.

## WHAT SONGS WOULD YOU HAVE ON YOUR IPOD TO GET YOU IN THE MOOD TO COMPETE?

Most of my pre comp playlist is made up of Eminem which gets me thinking about what I want to happen. I also throw in a little freestyle to get me in the zone.

## IS THERE A LUCKY/FAVOURITE LEOTARD YOU WEAR FOR BIG COMPS?

I only really wear my club leotard or Great Britain ones but when I wear these I usually do well.. touch wood.

## IS THERE A PARTICULAR PERSON OR GROUP OF PEOPLE THAT YOU THINK BRING YOU LUCK WHEN COMPETING?

My family come to most of my competitions so I guess they are my lucky charms as they help by supporting me and cheering me on. When I am at a team competition I would say my team.

## WHAT ARE YOUR THREE BEST MEMORIES FROM YOUR CAREER?

My first ever international that was in Austria called "The Future Cup" that was the start of my career as a gymnast. The 2012 London Open where I scored my personal best of 85.4, and the biggest competition of my life that I have done so far junior Europeans - I have never felt the nerves as much as I did there but the team pulled through and we won.

## WHAT WOULD BE THE PERFECT DAY OFF FOR YOU?

Something creative or active to get my mind off gym (although I love gym, I spend so much time there it's great to get away) I would usually go shopping or to the park with my friends or family.

## IF YOU WEREN'T A GYMNAST WHAT WOULD BE YOUR DREAM JOB AND WHY?

I would love to be a stuntman as it is an active job within all different kinds of sports. It may be dangerous but It earns a lot of money. This could also progress to me acting in lead roles in films and TV.

# Best in the World

**“We are aiming to be the best in the World...”** says Steve Halsey, assistant coach of the England women’s rugby under 20’s squad, in a statement that explains why he is looking towards trampoline conditioning to improve his side by the marginal percentages required to finally win the World Cup.





Jaime Halsey

Getting on a trampoline isn't the first thing that would spring to mind when attempting to turn those narrow defeats into wins, but for Halsey, who is married to Great Britain's first female trampoline Olympian, Jaime Moore (now Halsey), the decision to bring his squad to Northampton Trampoline Centre for a day of intensive coaching was a simple one.

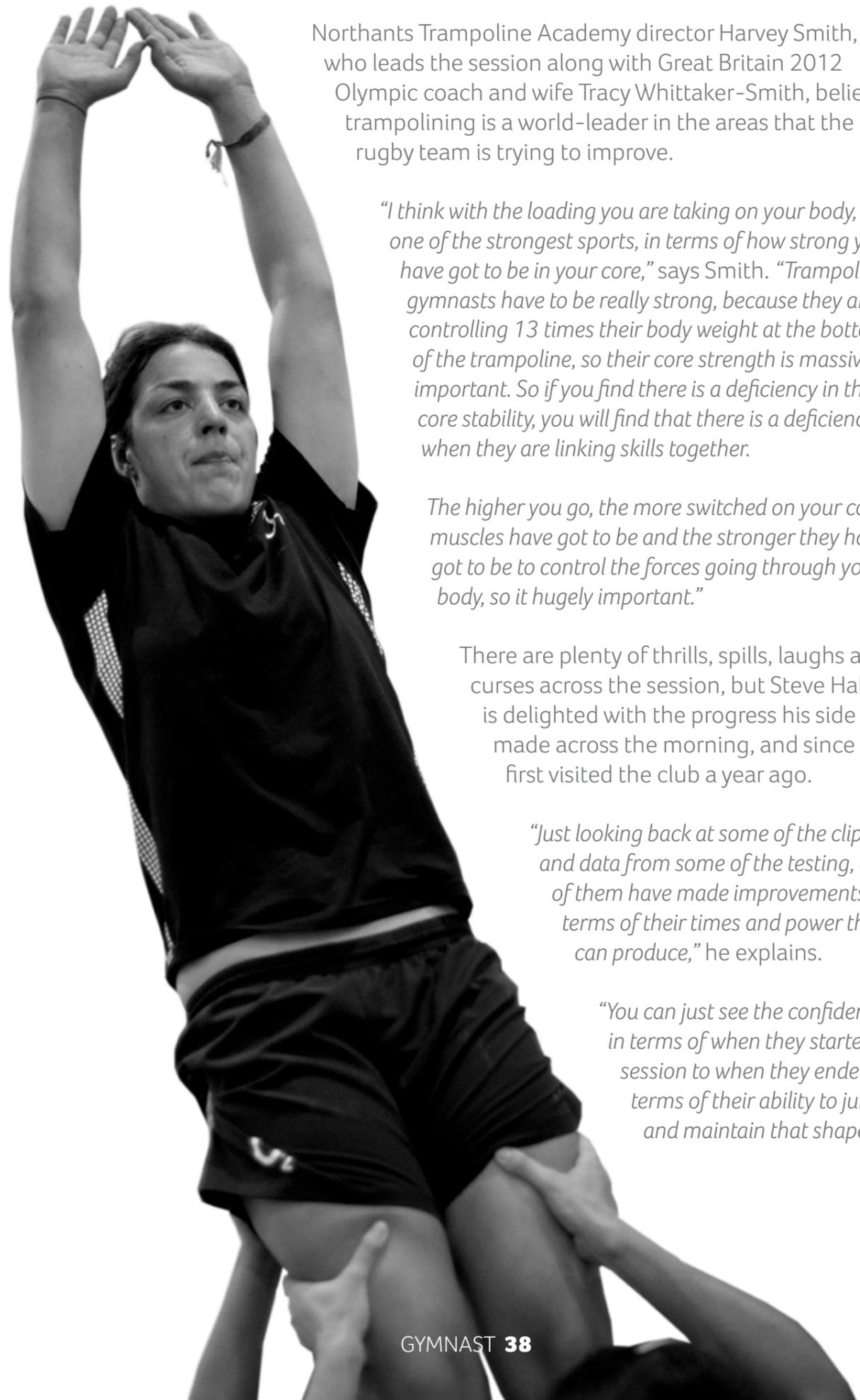
*"From my experience of seeing high-level trampolining, there is a massive cross over between the two sports," he says. "For me it is looking at bringing in other areas that are going to bring marginal improvements in performance. If we can improve the speed and shape of our lineout jumpers and their ability to catch the ball under pressure, it is going to improve our lineouts.*

*We are aiming to be the best in the world, for a long period of time, and it is the two or three percent difference between being a couple of points down in the game with two or three minutes to go and nailing that lineout - because they can keep their shape under pressure when they are fatigued - that could be the difference between coming short at the World Cup Final, which they have done the last three times, or actually winning it."*

Gymnasts are well known for their incredible strength and spatial awareness, having to hold static positions to impress judges or maintaining positional sense while twisting and somersaulting multiple times over, and Halsey, a PE teacher at Caroline Chisholm school, has pinpointed those areas as priorities of improvement for his players.

**“THE  
CONDITIONING  
ASPECT OF  
TRAMPOLINING  
IS MASSIVE. IN  
TERMS OF CORE  
STRENGTH,  
USING YOUR  
GLUTES AND  
ACTIVATION  
TO HAVE THAT  
CONFIDENCE  
AND ABILITY TO  
MAINTAIN THAT  
STRENGTH IN  
THE AIR.”**





Northants Trampoline Academy director Harvey Smith, who leads the session along with Great Britain 2012 Olympic coach and wife Tracy Whittaker-Smith, believes trampolining is a world-leader in the areas that the rugby team is trying to improve.

*"I think with the loading you are taking on your body, it is one of the strongest sports, in terms of how strong you have got to be in your core," says Smith. "Trampoline gymnasts have to be really strong, because they are controlling 13 times their body weight at the bottom of the trampoline, so their core strength is massively important. So if you find there is a deficiency in their core stability, you will find that there is a deficiency when they are linking skills together."*

*The higher you go, the more switched on your core muscles have got to be and the stronger they have got to be to control the forces going through your body, so it hugely important."*

There are plenty of thrills, spills, laughs and curses across the session, but Steve Halsey is delighted with the progress his side has made across the morning, and since they first visited the club a year ago.

*"Just looking back at some of the clips and data from some of the testing, all of them have made improvements in terms of their times and power they can produce," he explains.*

*"You can just see the confidence in terms of when they started the session to when they ended it in terms of their ability to jump and maintain that shape."*

*It has been really, really good and the players have worked incredibly hard. But for them, it is the same information coming in a different way, and allows them to develop and learn techniques by having that fresh stimulus."*

An exhausted Sarah Hunt points out that some of the jumps have gone wrong proving that it is not as easy as it looks. *"It's really been out of the ordinary, some of the stuff we have been put through."* she says.

**"THE JUMPING AND THE TRAMPOLINE SKILLS TAKE AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF SKILL BUT IT IS REALLY TRANSFERABLE IN TO WHAT WE HAVE TO DO IN RUGBY AND IN OUR LINEOUTS IN TERMS OF OUR BODY MANAGEMENT IN THE AIR AND OUR CORE STABILITY."**



*“It seems really, really easy, the fact we are just going to go and jump on a trampoline, but it is really hard work and some of the skills we have been taught are invaluable to us to help with rugby.”*

*The skills that the trampolinists have, we definitely need to improve on in rugby. Some of the things that are easy and basic, we found extremely hard. It is definitely hard work, they make it look easy. You see it on the TV and they are jumping, doing twists, doing turns, and we are struggling to stay in the same place up and down.*

*We did testing, a 10 bounce test for height and everyone improved by the end. So all the advice – looking at our foot movement, our core strength, led to an improvement by everyone at the end, which shows we are making progress.”*

The acid test for Halsey’s side comes in two months time, when World Champions New Zealand visit for a three test series. Despite England having had plenty of success over recent years, the Kiwi’s are the team they are targeting, ready to knock them off the perch – we all wish them good luck.

The above article was first published by **TREND HEALTH, FITNESS & LIFESTYLE** - a fresh, innovative and vibrant monthly magazine for Northamptonshire, offering the best in health and fitness advice, as well as modern lifestyle, beauty, fashion, sport and entertainment and has been edited for usage and re-purposed with thanks to Editor In Chief Steve Walsh, a Great Britain trampoline gymnast.

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# EXCEL

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### Rhythmic Gymnastics

Echappe with the Rope

By Sarah Smith



#### REMINDER

Coaches should only coach skills that are contained within their current BG qualifications and within a BG recognised environment.

### Women's Artistic

Improving Beam Dance

By Rochelle Douglas



### Gymnastics for All

Developing Forward Rotation

By Sine Rance



All **Excel Tips of the Week** will be released every Thursday morning. Keep an eye on **GymBlast** to find out what each weekly tip will be.



# what's Coming up

## November

17 November  
**VETERANS**  
**British Championships**  
Benfield SC,  
Newcastle Upon Tyne

17 November  
**RHYTHMIC**  
**Club Team**  
**Championships &**  
**Round 2 National Group**  
**League**  
Walsall Sports Centre

17-18 November  
**WOMEN'S ARTISTIC**  
**Compulsory L2 re-take**  
**in Age/Challenge Cup**  
**Junior & Senior**  
Rushmoor GA,  
Aldershot

18 November  
**DISABILITY**  
**Artistic Gymnastics**  
**British Championships**  
Benfield SC,  
Newcastle Upon Tyne

24 November  
**DISABILITY**  
**Rhythmic NDP**  
Falcon Spartak,  
Hurtsmere School,  
Sidcup

24-25 November  
**ACRO & TUMBLING**  
**Open Tournament**  
Fenton Manor,  
Stoke-on-Trent

## December

2 December  
**TRAMPOLINE**  
**Youth International**  
**GBR v GER**  
Rossmore Leisure  
Centre, Poole

8 December  
**MEN'S & WOMEN'S**  
**ARTISTIC**  
**FIG Artistic World Cup**  
Emirates Arena,  
Glasgow

8 December  
**MEN'S ARTISTIC**  
**Youth 4-way**  
**International**  
**GBR v FRA v GER v SUI**  
GMAC,  
Alexander Stadium,  
Birmingham

8 December  
**RHYTHMIC**  
**National Group**  
**Championships &**  
**Round 3 National Group**  
**League**  
Walsall Sports Centre



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