



Nicola's Spring Newsletter 2015



I hope you all had a lovely Easter and didn't eat too much chocolate!!

Here's my newsletter at last :0)

I started the new club season with an exciting move to Holcombe HC who are based in Kent. This was a new challenge for me and I have thoroughly enjoyed my first season there. We finished 5th in the outdoor premier division, narrowly missing out on the playoffs for the championship and we also secured promotion in the indoor hockey, now moving into division one.

This has been the most successful season for the Kent hockey club to date and with the added success of the Men's X1 securing promotion to the premier division, a great excitement has filled the club and a profile can be further built to attract audiences and players.



I have had some time away from my athlete appearances as I felt I needed to focus fully on my hockey especially after the disappointment of missing out on selection for the Champions Trophy last December, but it was a lovely surprise to be told by UK Sport that I was in the top 10 athletes from London 2012 who did the most appearances after the games. Over 10,000 days were given back by all the athletes in total and I was listed at no.7. It was fantastic to get the recognition for all my efforts as in total I did over 80 appearances and had to turn down many more as it was impossible to fit them all in.

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HOLCOMBE OFF TO THE WHITE START

For value for money, Holcombe Park was the place to be on Saturday with both Holcombe's men's and women's sides in action in the double-header of the day. Holcombe's senior teams have made some significant signing during the Summer, and the strength of the sides was nicely encapsulated by a photoshoot where the club was able to show off no less than 10 Commonwealth Games medal winners.

Amongst those showing off their medals was new signing Nicola White from Leicester. Playing Bowdon Hightown in the Investor Women's Premier League, it did not take long for White to show what a valuable signing she is with a neat little tap-in to give the home side a lead in the eighth minute. Leigh Maarstorp made it two 16 minutes later from a penalty corner, and Hightown seemed to be struggling to keep their opponents in check.

It was not all one-way traffic. Maddie Hinch in the Holcombe goal was called on to make at least one save at full stretch. All the other end of the pitch, young Amy Tennant did a lot of good work to keep the score respectable.

Early in the second half Nicci Daly scored Holcombe's third to put the result beyond doubt, and the match ended 3-0 in their favour.

To be honest, it was not the best match we will see this season, but with an impressive defence in the form of Hinch, Laura Unsworth and Sam Quirk, Holcombe will almost certainly be in the running for honours at the end of the season.



Nicola White celebrates her goal against Bowdon Hightown

NOW: Pensions Men's Premier Division

BEESTON SET OUT THEIR STALL FOR 2014-2015

Beeston, last season's League Champions, and runners-up in the table, gave notice that they were back with a vengeance with a 6-2 win over Canterbury. Five Beeston players got their names on the scoresheet: Gordon McGrigin, Sam Ward, Tim Whitman, Ben Arnold (2) and David Ames. Canterbury's scorers were Harry Roberts and Kwan Brown.

After a goalless first half at Surbiton, Reading took a lead soon after the break courtesy of a penalty corner from Ben Boon. It was a short-lived lead with Geoff McCabe, Alan Forsythe and Matt Daly giving the home side a 3-1 win.

The fixture list saw the two promoted sides facing each other with Southgate travelling to Brooklands MU. The Manchester side took an early lead with a penalty corner

7. Nicola White (Hockey)

"I was inspired as a kid watching the likes of Dame Kelly Holmes and Sally Gunnell, watching the Olympic Games, knowing that I wanted to follow in their footsteps and compete on the world stage.

"It is very rewarding making appearances to schools and clubs. Every athlete started there once and grew with inspiration and guidance. It is overwhelming to see their reaction to what we have achieved and by sharing the success with medals and giving a brief insight to the amazing world of elite sport, you are really showing that a dream job can become reality with hard work!

"Sometimes you become so engrossed in your training and environment that making these visits really does bring back to you why you do this job and the love you have always had for the sport."



GB training has been..... eventful should I say! We were snowed off for a couple of days and so had to improvise with video work and indoor gym work to keep us ticking over, and of course team snowball fights, but don't worry the coaching staff got their own back by putting us through a day of team challenges and "military hell" when the snow had JUST melted and the mud was nice and wet!! After 10 minutes of trying not to get mud in my nails or on my clean clothes, I think I realised it was going to get a whole lot worse and embraced it!



I was pretty pleased when I managed to escape the mayhem for a joint birthday weekend to Budapest with Ted, however we didn't escape the snow as you can see from my wooly hat! Absolutely loved the city and especially their hot chocolate with coconut!!

On a visit home last month I had a trip down to visit the Oldham Ladies hockey team and hopefully gave them a few tips along the way. It was lovely to see some familiar faces and have a bit of friendly fun whilst coaching. I even got a playing shirt from the club which is currently being named up as we speak.... Thanks Jeremy!



With being home I have taken a few visits to OCL Active for training sessions and I've very much enjoyed using their gym facilities! Thanks for your continued support of my training whilst back in the North West!

And not forgetting a trip to see my amazing sponsors for a well deserved cup of tea to finish off my trip home!



Our focus on the international stage has now turned its attention from England and the home nations to the Great Britain squad, aiming to qualify for Rio 2016. Qualification will be determined by finishing in one of the top three places at the World League semi-finals to be held in Valencia this June. We have had many practice matches against Chile, Ireland, Belgium and Spain to prepare for this tournament with games against Japan this month. As a team we are always improving and will have to be at our best to compete at world level and make the top three to qualify.

This August we are hosting the European Championships in London. This is a huge tournament where we will be up against the best teams in Europe including the Olympic and World Cup Champions the Netherlands.

So an action packed summer with lots of excitement and hard work ahead. If you wish to follow the hockey or come along and watch some of the games then you will find all the information on the websites below. The European Championships will be televised live on the BBC.



Websites: -Englandhockey.co.uk
-Greatbritainhockey.co.uk

Up and coming events:
-10th – 21st June World League Semi Finals Valencia Spain
-22nd – 30th August European Championships Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park

Appearances:
- 10th July Oldham Sports Awards
-12th July 'Race for Life' with ZenOffice team
-July/August TBC OCL Kids Summer Camp

You can follow me on twitter @NicolaWhite28

