

JORDAN GEARS UP FOR BRITISH CHALLENGE

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Observer Sport

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SWIMMING: Boldmere Swimming club are celebrating a record-breaking year at the Warwickshire championships. See inside for the full story.

Picture: Steve Harlow

Three wins from a perfect campaign

RUGBY UNION

SUTTON Coldfield RFC head-coach Matt Nevitt is determined to go the whole season unbeaten as his side close in on promotion ahead of tomorrow's top-of-the-table clash with Bournville, writes *Richard Latham*.

Sutton hold a five-point lead over their rivals with three games remaining and a win would virtually guarantee top-spot, but Nevitt is insisting on a 100 per cent finish.

"After last year's disappointment in the play-offs we knew that our aim had to be to win every game," he said.

"When the lads came back in for pre-season you could see the determination in them to avoid a repeat and to go all the way this time around.

"I think we need ten points from the final three games to secure promotion but we want to win all three.

"A win against Bournville could possibly be enough but our motivation is to finish unbeaten so we will carry on just taking each game as it comes.

"We are massively confident of a result, they are a good side but we beat them earlier in the season and we know what to expect.

"Our goal back in September was to go the whole season unbeaten and it's fantastic that we are just three games away from achieving it."

Bournville have lost only once all season.

Sutton won the reverse fixture 56-3 back in December.

Following tomorrow's top-of-the-table clash, Sutton face a trip to Warwickshire where they face already relegated Bedworth on April 14.

Barring a monumental slip up in their remaining three games, Sutton will be crowned champions of Midlands One West when they take on mid-table Camp Hill side on April 21.

HOW THEY STAND

RUGBY MIDLANDS ONE WEST				
	P	W	L	Pts
Sutton Coldfield	23	23	0	113
Bournville	23	22	1	108
Old Halesonians	23	16	6	81
Worcester W	23	14	9	76
Walsall	23	15	8	73
Lichfield	23	13	9	72
Burton	23	13	9	65
Camp Hill	23	9	14	48
Stratford	23	8	15	43
Whitchurch	23	7	15	40
Ludlow	23	8	15	39
Kenilworth	23	6	17	34
Bedworth	23	3	20	19
Dunlop	23	2	21	14

Sutton duo set for England duty in South Africa series

CRICKET

By **RICHARD LATHAM**
Sports Reporter

TALENTED Sutton Coldfield cricketers Helen Shipman and Amy Jones will travel to South Africa with the England Women's Academy next week after being selected for the tour as part of a 14-player squad.

Batsman Shipman, 20, and wicketkeeper Jones, 18, will be based in Potchefstroom from April 6 to 23, where England will play three Twenty20 matches and three 50-over matches against South Africa women.

The tour is the first of its kind for the Academy, who will

compete against the full South African international team.

Shipman said: "It feels really good to have been selected for the squad.

"I have known about the tour for a year and, of course, I was hopeful about being selected. But, with so much competition for places in the team, you can never expect to be picked.

"It was a real shock when I found out that I was included but it was a fantastic feeling.

"I am thrilled to get the chance to go out there, the opportunity to go on an international tour with your country doesn't come along very often."

Shipman is hoping that the tour will stand her in good stead in her goal of eventually



Helen Shipman is taking her batting talents on tour to South Africa

playing for the full England team.

"The academy tour will replicate what the full team do," she said.

"So if any of us do get the opportunity to make the step up then we will already have the experience of an international tour and we will know what to expect.

"That way it will be easier to settle in and just concentrate

on playing cricket.

"Long term, I would love to force my way into the full England team and I think a tour like this will really help me to achieve that."

Shipman is also relishing testing herself against top class opposition and is hoping to learn from the experience.

"Playing at a higher level against full internationals is such an exciting challenge," she added.

"I have been doing a lot more one-on-one sessions to make sure that I am as prepared as I can be.

"I've been trying to improve on specific areas, working with different bowling techniques and paces.

"Hopefully testing myself against them will benefit my

own game.

"It will be good to take the experiences into the new season back in England and hopefully it will make me a better player.

"This tour is a massive opportunity. Of course, I am nervous but I am more excited than anything.

"I just want to get out there and start playing."

ECB Head of Women's Cricket, Clare Connor said: "This tour represents a significant first in the women's game.

"Our players will experience the pressure of international cricket and will be able to gauge where they need to improve to enhance their chances of breaking into the full England women's squad."



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