



JORDAN TARGETS BRANDS PODIUM

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Observer Sport

Telephone: 01827 848495 | fax: 01827 848640 | email: sports.editorial@cintamworth.co.uk | www.thisissuttoncoldfield.co.uk



Boldmere Swimming Club were among the cream of the country at the National Finals in Sheffield last weekend. Turn to page 154 to see how they did.

Picture by Steve Harlow

Keogh vows cruel blow will strengthen Royals' resolve

FOOTBALL

By **MICHAEL BEARDMORE**
Sports reporter

SUTTON Town boss Chris Keogh admits missing out on the play-offs on goal difference for the second year running is a bitter pill to swallow.

But the Royals boss says the pain of losing out in stoppage time on the final day two years on the trot makes him more determined to achieve promotion next year.

Sutton only needed to match the result of rivals Slough on the final day to ensure a play-off spot, with the sides level on



Sutton Town boss Chris Keogh is still getting over the Royals' play-off heartbreak

points and goal difference but the Royals having scored more goals.

But while they were winning 2-0 at Beaconsfield, Sutton's tenants Romulus could not do them the favour they needed as the Roms lost 4-1 to Slough at Coles Lane.

The crucial fourth goal came in stoppage time, evoking memories of last season

when a late Chesham United goal gave them a play-off spot at Sutton's expense.

Keogh told *Observer Sport*: "It's a tough one to take but we have to dust ourselves down, it just wasn't meant to be. We did all we could but the other result didn't go our way.

"We were aware of the score at Romulus but I thought as long as we got a victory at Beaconsfield that would be enough.

"Personally I think we deserved to get in the play-offs but it's not about one game, it's over a whole season.

"Slough went on to beat Hitchin on Tuesday night, which was a bit tough to take

because if we had made the play-offs I'm confident we could have done it.

"Our away form has been good all season and I think we could have gone away, won both games and got promoted.

"I felt really sorry for the lads because the pitch at Beaconsfield was an absolute joke, almost impossible to play football on, so we did well to get two goals.

"I met up with most of the squad on Tuesday for a general chat and most of them have already agreed to stay.

"We can't beat ourselves up too much about it but it is going to be raw for a few weeks. We'll go away, have a

break and hopefully we won't have a hangover at the start of next season, like we did this season.

"We need to make sure we are well and truly over it, learn from the hurt of the last two years and make sure we do the job properly.

"That's three years we've made the top six so I think we've proven we're the best side in the Midlands at this level.

"We can be quite proud of that achievement given the budgets that some other clubs have.

"Getting so near has certainly made me more determined to get there next year."

Top stars step up to the oche for charity

DARTS: A MERE Green pub will be hosting a charity darts event this Bank Holiday weekend featuring some of the country's top players. The Pint Pot, on Tower Road, is holding a Let's Play Knockout Darts charity competition on Sunday to raise money for



Former world number five Dennis Smith will be at the Pint Pot this Sunday

two local cancer charities. Events begin at 12noon and include a 501 knockout darts tournament, and a novel tag team competition with the winners taking on the Dream Team of former world champion Steve Beaton, Jamie Caven, former world number five Dennis Smith, and the Pint Pot's own new professional Mark "Mile High" Hylton.

Sides padding up for summer again

CRICKET: The Birmingham League season gets under way tomorrow with Walmley CC entertaining Knowle and Dorridge in the Premier Division (12pm start).

Sutton CC firsts, captained by Mark Guest, travel away to Bablake Old Boys in Division Three, while the seconds are in action at Rectory Park against Bridgnorth.

Rimmer is one of Rocket's future stars

SNOOKER: Young Sutton potter Jordan Rimmer proved a big hit with the 'Rocket' Ronnie O'Sullivan last week. The 15-year-old, who plays at the Ballroom Snooker Club in



Jordan Rimmer has impressed the Rocket, Ronnie O'Sullivan

Wylde Green, made it through 800 entrants to reach the last eight of Ronnie's Future Stars competition. He came second in the final, held in Sheffield, during the World Championships, and judged by O'Sullivan. It was won by Joel Walker of Sheffield.

Westgate shines in front of GB selectors at national pentathlon trials

ATHLETICS

JEMMA Westgate continued to show her wide ranging sporting prowess with two top three finishes at the GB National Pentathlon Trials in Bath.

Competing in the Youth B age group (under-17s), Westgate (left) set a new personal best in the swimming pool on Saturday of 2.32mins for the 200m long course to earn 976 points in 11th place out of 28 athletes.

Westgate then competed in the com-

bined running and pistol shooting and after running 50m, she had a great start to the shoot, knocking down the five targets in 32secs.

Westgate then left the arena onto the first 1km run in sixth place but overtook two rivals to re-enter the shooting arena in fourth place, after running the 1km course in 3.41mins.

The Sutton star then enjoyed another great shoot, knocking down the five targets in 35secs, leaving the arena in second place.

She ran the second 1km course in 3.40mins and was overtaken by one athlete to finish the first day in third place with an overall total of 3,248 points.

In a separate event held on Sunday, Westgate started in the pool with a 200m swim, setting a new personal best, giving her 1004 points going into the combined event, where she again performed superbly, finishing in 8.56:91mins to claim second place, giving her a total of 3,260 points.



Jemma Westgate has been in top form.

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