



## RUGBY MEN CRANK UP THE PRESSURE

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# Observer Sport

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# Dan seals a hat-trick of world titles with new best

## ATHLETICS

DAN Greaves lived up to his pre-IPC World Athletics Championship promise in New Zealand – not only taking discus gold but breaking his own world record as well.

The Sutton Coldfield-born 28-year-old travelled to the land of the long white cloud as the defending F44 discus world champion, having won his first title in Lille in 2002 and second in Assen four years later.

However, having lost the



**Dan Greaves was a record breaker in New Zealand this week**

Paralympic title he won in 2004 to American Jeremy Campbell in Beijing two years ago, Greaves took to the circle a completely different athlete to before.

Greaves unofficially broke his world record of 55.53m he set in 2005 four times last year and there was no stopping him at Christchurch's Queen Elizabeth II Park.

The Great Britain ace threw 58.98m with his fourth effort, comfortably winning gold ahead of Campbell – with the only blemish being that he didn't break the 60m barrier in the Garden City.

"I was really, really

confident I'd win and set a new world record," said Greaves.

"I was bit annoyed after the first three throws because I hadn't broken the record, but I went to the toilet and regrouped and in the fourth round I was just so much more relaxed.

"I grew from that and thought 60m was possible. I thought I could easily pick up a metre and two centimetres, but unfortunately it wasn't to be – I'll have my time, though.

"And after Beijing and the disappointment there, to do this just surpasses all of it and it's a really nice feeling to win again.

"I took time off for quite a while after Beijing and just regrouped and made sure I had a look at every little aspect of everything.

"And I think it came down to me just losing my way a bit, so I refocused and I think this puts me in good stead for the London 2012 Paralympics."

■ Aviva has been supporting British athletes since 1999. To find out more about Aviva's athletics sponsorship, go to [aviva.co.uk/athletics](http://aviva.co.uk/athletics)

## New deal for Hurst

SUTTON'S Jame Hurst has penned an improved contract with West Brom after making a first-team breakthrough with the Baggies.

The 18-year-old full-back has signed a two-and-a-half-year deal, plus a further year's option in the club's favour.



**SUTTON Coldfield's Kathryn Fowler doesn't need Alan Sugar to tell her she's a top apprentice – she has been named water polo's Advanced Apprentice of the Year 2011. Fowler, a member of Boldmere Swimming Club but who now competes for City of Liverpool Water Polo Club, took the title as she graduated from the**

**Advanced Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence (AASE) programme. Fowler was one of 102 athletes from the world of aquatics who completed their unique apprenticeship, designed to help young people aged 16 to 18 combine education and sport. After captaining the British water polo youth women's**

**team, Fowler started training with the senior squad. She was highest scorer for Liverpool when she played at the LEN European Champions Cup in Athens in December 2009. She secured high grades for her A-Levels and at the moment is studying maths and physics at university.**

## Travel with Lions to see the Red Devils

**VILLA COACH:** Sutton Coldfield Lions are running a coach to Aston Villa's away game at Manchester United on Tuesday (February 1). The coach leaves the Halfway House, Mere Green at 2pm with further pick-ups at McDonalds in Sutton town centre, The Fox at Walmley, The Yenton, Blockbusters in Erdington and The Armada in Gravelly Hill. The cost is £18 adults and £10 per accompanied child. Call Mark Goodwin on 07815 838195 for more details.

## Get padded up for new youth academy

**CRICKET:** Wishaw and Four Oaks Cricket Clubs have launched a combined Youth Academy for 2011. The academy will run on Friday nights from tonight (January 28) through to August, initially indoors at Arthur Terry School from 7-8.30pm. The sessions will move to Wishaw's Church Lane ground in mid-April. Junior and senior players have access to three sides on a Saturday and two on a Sunday. Any senior players looking for a new challenge should call Simon Walker on 07833 310070. Juniors should call Jim Parkes on 0121 382 9545 or visit [fouroaksc.co.uk](http://fouroaksc.co.uk) or [wishawcricketclub.co.uk](http://wishawcricketclub.co.uk)

## Fair play to cricket stars for recognition

**FAIR PLAY:** The Royal Town's two premier cricket clubs have received some consolation for disappointing seasons by claiming fair play awards. Walmley CC finished bottom of the Birmingham League Premier but received that division's fair play honour, while Sutton CC, who narrowly avoided relegation, received the Division Three award.

## Wylde boys in need of defensive cover

**APPEAL:** Wylde Green FC under-14s are looking for an experienced defender/midfielder to complete their squad for the second half of the season. Call manager Fran Davie on 07792 736116 for more information.

# Roms are back on the road looking to continue their excellent work

## FOOTBALL

ROMULUS take to their travels this weekend as they face struggling Leek Town with boss Richard Evans having the luxury of a full compliment to choose from, writes Andy Mitchell.

It is an extra boost for a Roms side who have reeled off six consecutive league wins,

gaining 31 points from their last 13 games, after winning 1-0 at Carlton Town on Wednesday night.

Richard Evans Junior and Peter Folkes came through full training while youngster Ben Richards-Everton is also available.

"It's great to have healthy competition for places," said Evans. "While the current

team is in such good form, it's still reassuring to know that these lads are fit and ready when called upon.

"They have been long-term injuries for both Peter and Richard, so to be able to bring them back in a timely fashion, without having to rush, has been pleasing."

Tomorrow's fixture puts the Roms' progress through the

non-league pyramid into perspective.

Just 12 years ago Leek were plying their trade in what is now the Blue Square Premier while Evans was guiding Romulus in their final season in Sunday football.

But while he reflects proudly on the achievement, Evans is not one to rest on past glories. "Leek have always

been a decent-sized club," said Evans. "They always were during my playing career, but to see how we've caught up with them over the space of 12 years is remarkable.

"I'm not one for too much nostalgia, though. We have a determination to progress even further, both on and off the pitch, and you don't do that by looking backwards."

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