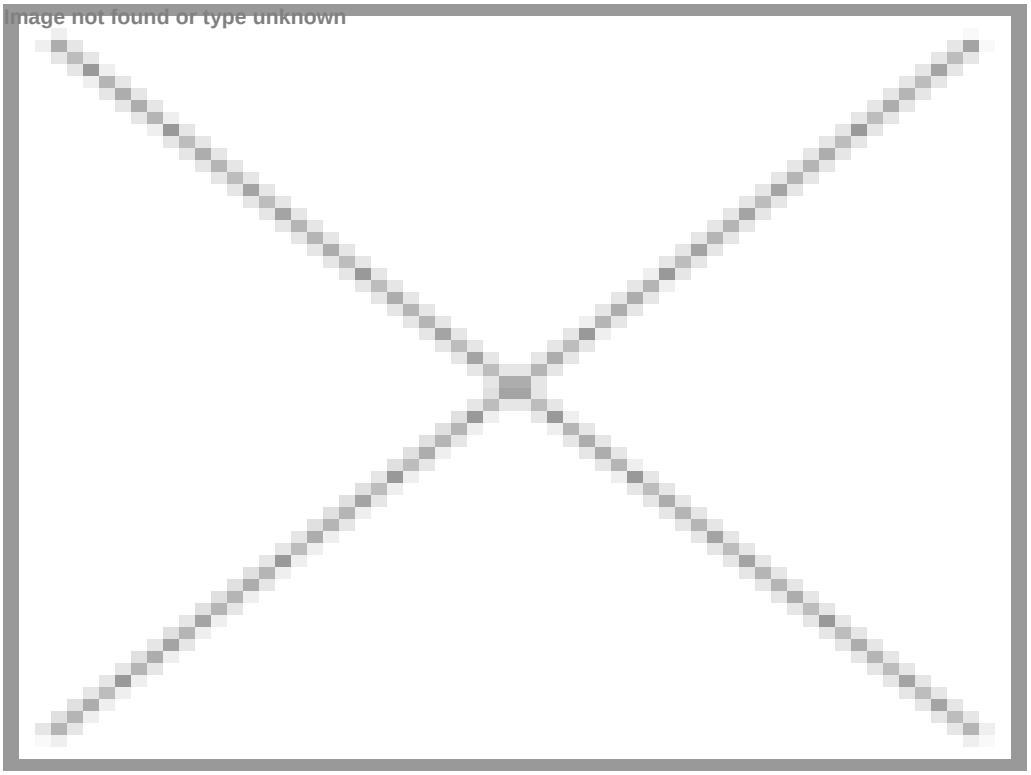
01 APR 2014

# BRITISH SCHOOLS' MODERN BIATHLON CHAMPIONSHIPS 2014 TO BE HELD AT OLYMPIC PARK




Around 1600 young people will follow in the footsteps of the world's finest athletes when Pentathlon GB's British Schools' Modern Biathlon Championships are held in the inspirational setting of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. The championships are set to take place Saturday 5 April and Sunday 6 April with competitors swimming in the London 2012 Olympic pool at the iconic London Aquatics Centre and running on a course just outside the centre.

The competition comes less than two years after Britain's Samantha Murray produced a terrific swim in the same pool en route to winning the silver medal at the London 2012 Olympic Games. It is part of the Olympic Legacy commitment to host a range of local, regional and national events for both junior and senior school competitors.

Anthony Temple QC, Chairman of Pentathlon GB, said it will be exciting for young athletes from around the country to compete at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, declaring, "It will be hugely inspirational for young athletes to have the opportunity to compete in the pool where the world's

finest modern pentathletes battled it out for Olympic medals less than two years ago."

His views were echoed by Jamie Cooke, who took up modern pentathlon after competing at the British Schools' Modern Biathlon Championships. He won the world junior championships in 2011 and is currently ranked number four in the world. He said: "It will be incredible for the young athletes to swim in the same pool as some of your sporting heroes, people like Michael Phelps. It's a very exciting opportunity and I'm sure it will help to inspire young athletes."

Athletes aged nine to 18 will descend on the Olympic Park for the championship finals. The younger athletes swim 50m and run 800m, while the older age groups swim 200m and run 1600m. The girls' competition is on Saturday 5 April with the boys in action on Sunday 6 April.

Alexander Allen, a 17-year-old student at Millfield School in Street, Somerset, is one of the young athletes looking forward to the prospect of competing at Olympic Park for the first time. Alexander, who receives support from Team Somerset 500 Club – a charity that backs aspiring young Somerset athletes - has won the individual titles for his age at four of the last five championship finals. "It will be an awesome experience to compete at Olympic Park," he said. "To have the chance to race in the Olympic pool and run within the Olympic Park will feel as good as it gets."

Ten-year-old Luke Warren, a pupil at Bromsgrove School, is also excited by the opportunity of competing at Olympic Park. Luke, who competed in last year's finals and has now tried all five disciplines that make up the modern pentathlon, said: "Watching the Olympic swimmers in 2012 was brilliant. "Now we have the chance to swim in the same pool as the Olympic and Paralympic champions like Michael Phelps and Ellie Simmonds. That's cool."

Peter Bundey, Deputy Managing Director for GLL, the charitable social enterprise that operates the London Aquatics Centre added, "This one of the most iconic buildings created for the 2012 Games. We are delighted that the next generation of potential Olympic athletes will now have the chance to access this world class facility and draw inspiration from the international swimmers who competed here. "To be hosting the Pentathlon GB British Schools' Modern Biathlon Championship is another example of the Olympic Legacy in action and we look forward to welcoming young athletes from across the UK at the event."

Athletes qualified to compete at the championships by setting qualifying times at a number of events around the country. Around 4,000 young people entered those qualifiers. Great Britain has an impressive track record in the Olympic sport of modern pentathlon, with some of the current crop of talented athletes having progressed from competing at the British Schools' Modern Biathlon Championships.

They include London 2012 Olympian and 2012 world champion Mhairi Spence, as well as Jamie Cooke and Joe Evans, who is currently ranked 20th in the world and a bronze medallist on his World Cup debut in the USA a year ago.

Further information and a timetable for the event can be found HERE

Pentathlon GB is the National Governing Body for the Olympic Sport of Modern Pentathlon. Further information about the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park is available HERE. For further information members of the media can contact the Pentathlon GB press office at Matchtight Ltd on +44 1225 383518 or +44 7765 071683.