

## Williams wins

**GOLF:** HERTFORDSHIRE'S Lucy Williams won the 2011 English Women's Amateur Golf Championship at West Sussex when she defeated 15-year-old Charley Hull on the 19th hole of an outstanding final.

Lucy, the No.2 seed, came back from one down after 16 to snatch the title on the 19th with a finish of birdie, eagle, birdie.

"I am just so happy, shocked, over the moon!" said the 21-year-old from Mid-Herts. "It was a brilliant, brilliant match. I knew it would be hard, but the way I played in the strokeplay qualifying showed me I could do it."

## Records tumble

**SWIMMING:** CITY of St Albans Swimming Club (Costa) had a successful evening on Saturday at the second round of the Peanuts League. Both of the club's junior teams took part, with the A team coming second in Division 1 and the B team coming second in Division 2. The club achieved a total of 31 PBs and 64 top three positions on the night.

The star performers on the A team were the nine-year-old boys, who won both of their relays and several individual races to boot. Most impressive was Ben Mucklestone, who swam with the Midas touch, as all of his races earned him gold. He claimed first place in the nine-years boys 25m freestyle with a very fast swim of 15.67s, finishing a staggering 2.5 seconds ahead of the runner-up. He also came first in the 25m butterfly, as well as helping to secure victories in the relays.

The U11 boys also performed impressively for the A team, winning the freestyle relay and other individual events. Regionals qualifier, 11-year-old Alex Ong, swam to victory in the U12 boys breaststroke in 43.30s and David Hensman gained a new PB of 19.55s when he won the U11 boys 25m backstroke. Also worthy of praise is Ross Ferreira, who was the most improved swimmer on the team, knocking 2.5 seconds off his PB for 50m butterfly and over 1.5 seconds off his PB for 50m freestyle.

The B team went from strength to strength on Saturday finishing in second place, having come fourth in the previous round. Some of the very keen young swimmers were competing in their first ever Peanuts gala, and for others it was only their second.

The nine-year-old girls and the under-11 girls were tremendous, winning their relays while in the individual events, Oliver Astley showed his experience by taking first place in the U13 boys 50m backstroke with a time of 41.06s, which was over two seconds faster than the runner-up. Zoe Horne was delighted to win the U12 girls 25m backstroke in 19.69s and Ben Baldwin won a very exciting race in the U12 boys 25m backstroke, narrowly beating the Bushey swimmer with a time of 20.97s.

## Semi-final showdown

**TENNIS:** ST ALBANS Tennis Club will once again have two teams taking part in the final stages of the Chiltern 12-and-under Cup on Sunday, June 5, to be played at Gosling High Performance Centre in Welwyn Garden City.

The competition, which commenced in October, is open to clubs in Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire and the teams of two boys and two girls have been competing over the winter months in two round robin leagues.

Such is the depth in this age group at the Jersey Lane club, two teams were entered and both have been undefeated throughout.

The St Albans Astronauts won four of their matches and drew one and finished runners up in their league behind Northaw and Cuffley. St Albans Boomerangs had similar statistics but finished on top of their league setting up a semi-final tie between the two St Albans teams. The winners of the semi-final tie will face either Northaw and Cuffley or Legends in the final.

Representing the St Albans Astronauts will be Olivia Elsmark, Josh Cozens, Nathan Davies and Amy Lewis and representing the Boomerangs will be Lucy Girdlestone, Daniel Goldingay, Katie Yates and Aaron Jacobs.

## St Albans District ends East Herts' County dominance

**SWIMMING:** AT the Hertfordshire Primary Schools Swimming Championships last Friday night, East Herts' five-year winning streak came to an end as St Albans District recorded its first win in seven years at the championships.

Led by their captain, Nathan Hughes, who recorded a new gala record in the Year 6 Boys 50m butterfly, the team of 32 swimmers across Years 5 and 6 performed outstandingly, achieving the overall win by a significant margin over East Herts.

The Year 6 Boys and Year 5 Girls each won their respective age groups, with Kaitalin Dang putting in an excellent performance to knock two seconds off the existing 2007 record to win the Year 5 50m backstroke. Other notable performances came from Isobel Donovan, Piers Watford, Callum Keane, Freya Bennett, Monica Ong, Ralph Muncer, Ben Mucklestone, Nicole Fletcher, Shannon Stott, David Hensman, Ben Galvin, and Cara Foulkes who



all recorded second or third places.

Eight swimmers from the team will now go on to represent Hertfordshire in the English Schools Swimming Division 10 Inter-county Primary Schools Championships in June.

The St Albans District Schools Swimming Association committee commented that the team did themselves proud and showed the high standard and impressive depth in primary school swimming in the St Albans District.

# Centurions get back on the winning trail

**RLC Conference**

**West London 18**

**St Albans Centurions 34**

**RUGBY LEAGUE: RUGBY League on the banks of the River Thames, on a pitch between two rowing clubs was the unusual setting for the St Albans Centurions when they travelled to Chiswick in West London to play the West London Sharks on Saturday.**

After their first defeat of the season last week, Cents, now sitting in third place, were looking for a victory against fourth place Sharks to keep in contention at the top of the table.

It looked like it could have been a repeat of last week's defeat when after five minutes, Sharks centre John McLean intercepted a pass, broke the line and a quick pass out wide allowed winger Damian Lewis to score out wide. It was almost a case of déjà vu when in the next set of six, another Cents long pass was again intercepted by a West London player but the Cents thwarted the attack yards from their line.

The Sharks knocked the ball forward on their next set of possession and from the resulting scrum the impressive St Albans forwards drove the ball up field onto the Sharks 30 metre line.

A quick play the ball found Oli Fountain at acting half-back and he used his speed and neat footwork to dance around several defenders before scoring under the posts and converting his own try.

There then followed a period when the West London outfit put continued pressure on St Albans.

J. P. Burns scored out wide after some poor Cents tackling, and, after giving away two penalties on the trot the Sharks were given another chance to score, which they took, when Miller finally broke the Saints line and scored a try, which was converted.

Sharks were leading 14 points to 6 when the St Albans team began to play good rugby, and scored two tries in the final 10 minutes of the half. The first try was scored when prop forward Dylan Rampling took the ball 10 yards out and went over the try line taking four defenders with him. This kick was converted by Fountain.

Five minutes later, another Cents for-



Ross Dempsey is stopped short of the try line. Photo by Darryl Brown.

ward, Joe Shaw came off the bench and made an immediate impact by breaking the West London defensive line and crashed over for an unconverted try in the corner to make the score 16-14 at half time in Cents' favour.

It looked a totally different St Albans team that took to the pitch in the second half. A very strong contingent of forwards were rotated from the Centurions' bench and this sparked continuous pressure on the Sharks defence.

Props Andy Lake and David Blinkhorn were both held up on the line, and within 10 minutes of the start Shaw scored his second and best try of the game when he broke several tackles and dived over the line to score from six feet out. Fountain converted the try.

The Cents appeared to be well in control of the game when the Sharks prop forward Clarke was sent off for dissent.

This probably put any chance of a fight back out of West London's reach as the Cents were in the ascendancy and this showed when winger Jimmy Moffitt side stepped his way through



Striders' Emma Ward, Claire Kremer, Helen Varley, Gladstone Thompson and Katie Chilton celebrating their runs in Edinburgh. Photo: Michelle Carty.

## Striders smash marathon PBs

**RUNNING:** Fifteen of the St Albans Striders travelled to the Scottish capital at the weekend to take part in the Edinburgh Marathon.

Although the course is famously flat, the runners faced brutal 22mph headwinds in the last eight miles, which meant some Herculean efforts were required to reach the finish line.

Despite the tough conditions, there were some excellent performances from the St Albans runners. Nikki Carter ducked under the 3 hours 30 mark for the first time while Judith Beard achieved a similar feat in beating four hours.

Meanwhile, training partners Claire Kremer and Helen Varley both excelled to finish in 3 hours 42 and 3 hours 43 respectively. Ever-improving Gladstone Thompson also smashed through the 3 hours 45 mark in a new personal best time.

Having qualified for an elite place, Striders' chairman Sally Onn also posted a new personal best of 3 hours 2 minutes, but just missed out on the prize money in placing 11th female.

Deirdre Heydecker also continued to impress with an eighth place in the competitive FV55 category and a strong 3 hours 37 clocking.

Elsewhere there were noteworthy runs from Martin Whitworth (3:07), Ian Hider (3:23), Andy Jordan (3:39), Ray Marshall (4:00), Emma Ward (4:02), Shane Ryan (4:08), Katie Chilton (4:15) and Luke Hart (4:56).

Starting as defending champions, Striders have made a promising start to their 2011 Midweek Road Race League campaign. The League pits the top running clubs from Herts and Essex against one another over five evening fixtures in the summer months.

Although finishing only second in both the ladies' and men's sections at the opening race in Stevenage, the Striders were lacking a number of their fastest athletes, so the overall result was encouraging.

The second fixture at Bishop's Stortford last week was less successful, with the ladies again in second, but the men only managing third.

At Stevenage, leading from the front, men's captain Paul Adams was first Strider home in 33:15, finishing second overall. He was closely followed by Simon Riley, who continued his recent run of good form to post an impressive 33:48. Jonathan Scott, Blake Vivian and Pablo Plaza Lastras also made the top 10 in a high quality race.

Further back but still running well, the men's scoring 12 was completed by Gary Warren, Grant West, John Ockenden, Stuart Wright, Richard Harry, Matt Ennon and John Jones, all well under 39 minutes despite recent marathons still in the legs.

At Bishop's Stortford, Adams went one better to win the race overall. Riley again performed well in third, with Vivian in fifth.

New member Steve Cochrell was next Strider home in a promising 36:08, with Warren, Ockenden and Jones all looking very comfortable despite a hilly course.

Colin Braybrook, Neil Campbell, Simon Warner, Joe Dunne and Stuart Middleton completed the scoring 12 for the men.

On the ladies' side, first Strider over the line in fifth at both races was Onn with 40:21 at Stevenage, which she improved to 39:53 at Bishop's Stortford.

There were good runs from Zoe Lowe, Helen Cartlidge, Liz Walls and Mandy Aitree who were all very consistent and crucial to the ladies' scoring eight at both races.

At Stevenage, Heather Blamire-Brown, Claire Kremer and Varley all ran well to contribute to the team, with strong performances from Gill Jubb, Carole Ransom and Lucy Mills clinching the remaining spots at Bishop's Stortford.

■ Some of the sport stories you can find on our website this week



■ Youngsters from Harpenden RFC will be presented to a sell out crowd at Twickenham this weekend



■ Herts' win in pictures

■ More photos from Hertfordshire's convincing win over Gloucestershire can be found online.

■ Plus all the other sports news, match reports and photos from across the St Albans and Harpenden district.

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