



TEAM GB FUTURE OLYMPIC STARS TRAINING AT TEES BARRAGE

DIARY NOTE

TIME: 11am, Monday, 8 December 2008

WHERE: Four Seasons Whitewater Course, Tees Barrage, Stockton on Tees

Top national junior slalom canoeists Andrew Martin, 15, from Seaham and Callum Cresser, 11, from Darlington have been selected for an elite training camp for GB Canoeing taking place at the Tees Barrage on Saturday and Sunday 20 and 21 December.

They will be showing their skills at a photo/interview opportunity on Monday 8 December, ahead of the training session the following weekend.

Andrew who attends Seaham School of Technology has represented Team GB in a number of European competitions and often competes against adults who are several years older than him.

Callum is at Hummersknott Comprehensive in Darlington and has won the British Championship in slalom canoeing for his age group for the last two years.

Neil Buckley, junior development coach for GB Canoeing said: "I regularly travel from my base in Nottingham to support local athletes in Tees Valley and help the regional organiser Darren Cresser develop talent around here. We are all really looking forward to the redevelopment of the facilities which will be fantastic not just for top level Tees Valley canoeists but everyone who enjoys rafting as well."

Among the other members of this elite squad of junior canoeists, coming from all over the country on 20/21 December, will be Tom Bradley, European Junior Silver Medalist and shortlisted for BBC Young Sports Personality of the Year and Beth Latham, bronze medallist in the world championships.

On the Saturday, 12 – 16 year olds will be using the white water course which is a potential 2012 Olympic training camp and on Sunday, 16 – 23 year olds will be on the course.

Alan Slater, river manager, British Waterways said: "These talented youngsters are the adult canoeing stars of the future and we look forward to welcoming them and GB Canoeing here later this month."

Les Southerton, project director, Stockton Middlesbrough Initiative (SMI) said: “The training sessions this weekend are a real taste of what could come with the potential 2012 training camps coming here at the Tees Barrage. We have a number of really talented young athletes in the area and they are sure to be inspired by the high standard of coaching and national canoeists coming to the area.

The training session is part of the World Class Start training programme which supports potential future Olympic stars.

A £3.5m redevelopment of the Tees Barrage whitewater course will start in early 2009 which will make it one of the world’s most sustainable whitewater facilities, as it will generate its own electricity through giant Archimedes screws pumping water around it.

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