



PRESS RELEASE

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'On Camp with Kelly' athletes race at Aviva British Grand Prix

Eleven 'On Camp with Kelly' athletes will compete at the Aviva British Grand Prix in Gateshead on Monday 31 August. 'On Camp with Kelly', supported by Aviva since 2004, is double Olympic champion Dame Kelly Holmes' mentoring initiative for talented young middle distance athletes.

Five of the athletes line up in an exhibition 'On Camp with Kelly' 800m which will provide them with a good competitive race to end their seasons in front of a large crowd at a top class IAAF Grand Prix meeting.

The other six OCWK athletes will compete in the main Grand Prix event. **Charlotte Best** (Crawley AC) and **Alison Leonard** (Blackburn Harriers) line up in the women's 800m; **James Brewer** (Cheltenham Harriers), who was part of the Aviva GB & NI Team at the recent IAAF World Championships, and **Andrew Osagie** (Harlow AC) will compete in the men's 800m; and **Ricky Stevenson** (New Marske Harriers) and **Hannah England** (Oxford City AC) both race over 1500m.

The athletes in the 'On Camp with Kelly' 800m race are:

Tara Bird (Woodford Green with Essex Ladies & Brunel University), age 22, who has improved her personal best to 2:03.00 this year and won the BUCS and England Under 23 800m titles. She was selected for the 4x400m squad at the European Athletics Indoor Championships and competed over 800m at the European Athletics Under 23 Championships. Indoors she won a bronze medal at the Aviva UK Indoor Championships and the BUCS 400m title.

Danielle Christmas (Crawley AC & Loughborough Students), age 21, who has improved her personal best to 2:04.92 this season. She won silver in the 800m at the BUCS Championships and bronze at the Aviva England Under 23 Championships.

Stevie Stockton (Vale Royal AC & Loughborough Students), age 20, who has improved her 1500m best by eight seconds this year to 4:14.37 and her 800m best to 2:07.97. She won the silver medal over 1500m at both the Aviva England Under 23 Championships and the BUCS Championships and reached the final at the Aviva World Trials and UK Championships.

Rachael Thompson (Liverpool Harriers), age 23, who has previously competed over 800m at European Athletics Under 23 and Junior Championships. She has a personal best for 800m of 2:03.57.

Laura Weightman (Morpeth Harriers), age 18, who has improved her 800m best to 2:05.3 and her 1500m best by eight seconds to 4:14.9 this year. She defended her Senior Girls 1500m title at the Aviva ESAA English Schools Championships having also won the Intermediate title in 2007.

They will be joined in the race by **Sarah Kelly** (Dundee Hawkhill) who represented the Aviva GB & NI Team over 1500m at this year's IAAF World Youth Championships and local athlete **Karen Johns** (North Shields Poly). 'On Camp with Kelly' athlete **Leigh Lennon** (Newham & Essex Beagles) will be the pacemaker.

Dame Kelly said: "'On Camp with Kelly' is about giving athletes all the tools they need to achieve at the highest level in athletics and competing in a major televised meeting like this is another part of the learning process. I hope that the girls will benefit from the opportunity and end their seasons in style. It is also pleasing to see so many of the 'On Camp with Kelly' athletes competing in the main Grand Prix event as it shows that they are making a successful transition from junior to senior ranks which is an important aim of the initiative."

Tanya Veingard, Head of Sponsorship at Aviva, said: "We are committed to providing opportunities for young athletes and helping to make it easier for them to achieve their dreams. 'On Camp with Kelly' is about providing new and unique opportunities that will hopefully ensure the next generation of medal winners are confident and prepared to represent their country at an international level."

For more information about 'On Camp with Kelly', latest news and updates and full biographies of all the athletes go to www.oncampwithkelly.co.uk.

Notes to Editors

'On Camp with Kelly'

'On Camp with Kelly' (OCWK) was started by double Olympic champion Dame Kelly Holmes in January 2004 and with support and sponsorship from Aviva has grown from strength to strength. Over 60 athletes have been involved in the initiative to date.

Dame Kelly set up OCWK because she wanted to help talented young female middle distance athletes to achieve their dreams and to retain them in the sport. Her vision of OCWK was that it should be an educational development programme so that the athletes who are part of it gain life experiences as well as learn what it takes to become a world class athlete.

Eight girls were given the opportunity to participate in the first OCWK camp in South Africa in October 2004, funded by Aviva, and since then there have been regular Get-Togethers, a training camp in Spain and a camp in Melbourne during the 2006 Commonwealth Games, as well as the opportunity to race in international meetings across the UK and Europe. The athletes also benefit from mentoring from Dame Kelly as well as medical and financial support funded by Aviva.

For more information about 'On Camp with Kelly' visit www.oncampwithkelly.co.uk

Research

Aviva commissioned research by performance psychologist Dr Anna Waters, Chrianna Consultants Limited, to investigate the impact of the 'On Camp with Kelly' initiative and the positive role that mentoring can play in talent retention and development. The research showed that 'On Camp with Kelly' has had a significant impact on retaining female athletes in the sport in the late teenage years when drop out rates are traditionally high and has also led to improved performances in female middle distance running.

More information is available at http://www.oncampwithkelly.co.uk/news_detail.html?id=136

About Aviva

Aviva has been the team behind UK Athletics since 1999 and is committed to developing the sport at every level from the playground to the podium.

This year we'll have put on six world class athletics events on home soil and supported the Aviva GB & NI Team as they prepare for major championships. Through the Aviva UKA Academy it is anticipated that by 2012, we'll have given every child in the UK the opportunity to get involved in athletics.

Aviva is the world's fifth largest insurance group, serving 50 million customers across Europe, North America and Asia Pacific.

We are the largest insurance services provider in the UK and one of the leading providers of life and pension products in Europe.

For more information visit aviva.co.uk/athletics

For more information about Aviva's support of athletics please contact Gerri Carr at Hill & Knowlton on 0207 413 3000 or gerri.carr@hillandknowlton.com