



PRESS RELEASE

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'On Camp with Kelly' Athletes to compete at Aviva London Grand Prix

Seven of the UK's most talented young female middle distance athletes will benefit from the fantastic opportunity of competing in an 800m exhibition race during the Aviva London Grand Prix on Saturday 26 July. The annual IAAF Super Grand Prix is UK Athletics most prestigious televised meeting. The athletes are all part of double Olympic champion Dame Kelly Holmes' 'On Camp with Kelly' mentoring initiative, supported by Norwich Union.

The athletes competing in the race have been selected from the 45 athletes who are members of 'On Camp with Kelly' based on their performances to date in 2008. The line up is:

Tara Bird (Woodford Green with Essex Ladies), age 21, who recently set her fourth personal best of the season when finishing fifth in the 800m at the Aviva National Championships in 2:03.56. She has won gold in the 800m at the BUSA Championships and silver at the England Athletics Under 23 Championships this season.

Danielle Christmas (Crawley AC), age 20, who has set a new personal best of 2:05.59 this season and won 1500m silver and 800m bronze at the England Athletics Under 23 Championships. She was a semi-finalist in the 800m at the IAAF World Junior Championships in 2006.

Rowena Cole (Coventry Godiva Harriers), age 16, who won the Intermediate Girls 800m title at the 2008 English Schools Championships for the second year in a row and has reduced her personal best by three seconds to 2:07.15 this year.

Hannah England (Oxford City AC), age 21, who won the NCAA 1500m title in the USA in June in a new personal best of 4:06.19 which placed her top of the UK senior rankings. She narrowly missed out on selection for the Olympic Games after finishing third at the Aviva National Championships. Hannah will also compete in the 1500m in the main Grand Prix programme on Friday.

Laura Finucane (Pendle AC), age 21, who has made a late start to her season after recovering from injury. She was a finalist over 800m at both the European Athletics Under 23 Championships and the World University Games last year and has a personal best of 2:01.35.

Alison Leonard (Blackburn Harriers), age 18, who finished fourth in the 800m final at the 2008 IAAF World Junior Championships in a personal best of 2:02.15 after winning the 800m title at the England Athletics Under 20 Championships. She was a silver medallist at the IAAF World Youth Championships in 2007.

Rachel Stringer (City of Norwich), age 18, who won the Senior Girls 800m title at the 2008 English Schools Championships for the second year in a row and ran a personal best of 2:06.91 when winning the England Athletics Under 20 Indoor title.

For the first time this year three international athletes have been invited to take part in an 'On Camp with Kelly' race:

Machteld Mulder (Netherlands), age 19, who won the bronze medal in the 800m at the recent IAAF World Junior Championships in a new personal best time of 2:02.05 and was also a bronze medallist at last year's European Athletics Junior Championships.

Sofia Öberg (Sweden), age 18, who finished sixth in the 800m final at the IAAF World Junior Championships and fifth at last year's IAAF World Youth Championships and has a personal best of 2:04.11.

Agnieszka Sowinska (Poland), age 20, who has run 2:02.25 for 800m this year and finished third at the Polish National Championships. She was a semi-finalist over 800m at the IAAF World Junior Championships in 2006.

A number of 'On Camp with Kelly' athletes will be competing in other events at the Aviva London Grand Prix. Emma Pallant (Aldershot Farnham & District) will race in the 3000m in the main meeting programme and Kate Avery (Shildon Running & AC), Suzi Boast (Bedford & County), Jess Burns (City of Plymouth), Katie Knowles (Bristol & West), Charlotte Purdue (Aldershot Farnham & District), Louise Small (Aldershot Farnham & District) and Stevie Stockton (Vale Royal AC) will compete in the Under 20 3000m.

Dame Kelly said: "It has been a great year for 'On Camp with Kelly' athletes so far and I am expecting more good performances at the Aviva London Grand Prix. It is a fantastic opportunity for the athletes to compete in front of a large crowd in one of the biggest athletics meetings on the Grand Prix circuit. 'On Camp with Kelly' is about giving the athletes all the tools they need to achieve at the highest level in athletics and this is another part of the learning process."

Tanya Veingard, Head of Sponsorship at Norwich Union, said: "We are committed to providing opportunities for young athletes and helping to make it easier for them to achieve their dreams. Through our support of 'On Camp With Kelly' we are delighted to be helping nurture and develop talented girls into world class athletes that Britain can be proud of and we look forward to seeing them progress from strength to strength. As the team behind UK Athletics we are proud to be able to offer support for all levels of athletics – from grassroots through to elite – and 'On Camp with Kelly' is a fantastic programme for young girls who dream of winning gold."

Recently eight 'On Camp with Kelly' athletes received international recognition when they starred with Dame Kelly in an advert for Norwich Union's global customer brand Aviva which was shown on television channels in the UK and across Europe. To view the ad, visit www.oncampwithkelly.co.uk/ocwkvideo.html.

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

Notes to Editors

'On Camp with Kelly'

'On Camp with Kelly' (OCWK) started in January 2004 and with support and sponsorship from Norwich Union has grown from strength to strength. Over 50 athletes have been involved in the initiative to date.

Double Olympic Champion Dame Kelly Holmes set up OCWK because she wanted to help talented young female middle distance athletes to achieve their dreams. 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 and since then there have been regular Get-Together Weekends, 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.

For the first time in 2008, 11 talented young male athletes were invited to take part in an OCWK Educational Camp.

Norwich Union & UK Athletics

Aviva and Norwich Union have been the team behind UK Athletics since 1999 with a significant amount of money invested in developing the sport at grassroots level. This support is making it easier for every child in the UK to have the opportunity to have access to athletics by 2012, and provides extensive support to teachers to deliver the sport in schools.

Norwich Union and Aviva's support at every level will add value to the existing World Class Pathway investment in elite athletes, provide more opportunities to help identify future champions, and also help prepare children for life challenges through increased sporting participation.

Norwich Union is encouraging the nation to get behind athletics at all levels by supporting a local sporting initiative in their bid to win part of the £500,000 Community Sport Fund. For more information and to cast your vote visit www.joinourteam.com.