

Higgins wins 4th consecutive British title

James Higgins and Northamptonshire Trampoline Gymnastics Academy (NTGA) are celebrating after what can only be described as a fantastic weekend for Britain's number 1 man at the British Championships 2010 held at the stunning National Indoor Arena, Birmingham, the last domestic event of the season.

British Champion 2010, JAMES HIGGINS (26) – World ranked Higgins worked out his strategic plan to not only win his 4th consecutive Men's title but also secure his place on Great Britain's team for this year's World Championships to be held in Metz, France in November. Playing safe in the qualification round on Saturday Higgins opted for 2 simple but excellent routines in order to qualify for the top 8 final on the Sunday. He showed his technical excellence and also regained the Paul Luxon award which is an annual award for the gymnast who scores the highest points on execution in the qualification round. Again working out what he needed to win and secure his place on the team Higgins competed a strong and secure routine to gain exactly what he went to do at the Championships in order to continue on his international pathway for the remainder of the year which will involve 2 World Cup events and the World Championships.

Coach Tracy Whittaker-Smith said "James and I were relieved that the strategic plan worked and James secured not only a place on the British Team for this year's international campaign but his 4th consecutive British title in the senior men's event to add to his many junior British titles

Steve Walsh – last year's runner up to Higgins unfortunately had to withdraw from the British Championships on the qualification day due to injury. Walsh has had a run of bad luck this season so far after numerous bouts of injury and illness. Whittaker-Smith said "it has been a torrid time for Steve, we have had a new and more powerful trampoline introduced by the international federation and Steve had taken some time to adapt physically to the new gained height and power that is created on the new equipment leaving him with a back and ankle injury to manage for most of the year so far.

News in the ladies senior event is promising where newcomer to the senior level Penny Mitchell impressed on Sunday in the individual final and moved from 8th to 4th place after competing impressively. Penny's goal was to gain qualification to the final top 8 cut and anything else was a bonus. Harvey Smith (Mitchell's coach) said "Penny surpassed her own goals and made the most of the opportunity to compete in the final round performing in the best mental state I have witnessed in her so far. She deserves the success at the Championships after battling with adversity and also training twice a day whilst working part time and studying for a degree at University Northampton. Club team-mate and training partner, Amanda Harris, who lives in Kettering and travels to the Northampton Trampoline Centre nearly every day, qualified in to the final in 6th place after competing very well on the Saturday finished in 5th place after the final round. Harris has had a successful season securing podium finishes and also selection to the Great Britain Team.

This booster of a 5th place at the Championships will add confidence that all the work and commitment she has shown over the last 2 years training pretty much full time is paying off.

Kathleen Taylor added to the success of Northampton Club by securing a third place podium finish in the under 15 girls event. Taylor rose to the challenge of being the first competitor to compete in her age group and at her first British Championships. After day 1 of qualification she was in second spot. Taylor held her nerve very well on finals day when she competed in front of 100's of spectators at the NIA. The nerves of competing in front of the sort of crowd she has never experienced before showed through a little but she did enough to secure the unexpected podium place.

For any budding trampoline stars we are running summer fun activity every Monday to Friday 10-12 & 1-3 throughout the school holidays. Call 01604 645120 to book your chance to rub shoulders with the best in the country!